AMERICAN ARTISTS

By IVAN NARODNY

"NEW ERA LIBRARY"

Jesus" - Rabbi Hillel - 93 - Malachi of Babylon an
Astronomer - Perchance blindness is but a dark
thought that can be overcome by a burning thought.
Perchance a birthered limb is but idleness that can
be quickened by energy - And perhaps the devils, these
restless elements in our life, are driven out by the angel
of Peace & Serenity. 16 - "The Nazarene was the master Physi-
cian of His people - He beheld the evil Spirits that conspire
against our sinews, and also the good Spirits that Spin the
threads thereof. 40 - Verily no crime is committed by one
man or one woman. All crimes are committed by all
And the two pay the penalty may be breaking a link in
the chain that hangs upon your own ankles. Perhaps he
is paying with his Sorrow the price for your passing joy.
66 - Mary - Mother of Jesus - to Susannah of Nazareth a
neighbor "Come let us watch the Sun pour its blood
upon the hills" - And after a moment Mary said, "I
wonder who is crucifying the Sun this eventide.
216 - Master, master of Light
Whose eye dwells in the Seeking fingers of the blind
You are still despised & mocked.

AMERICAN ARTISTS

Book I

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—Roerich.

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AMERICAN ARTISTS

By IVAN NARODNY

INTRODUCTION BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

LIBRARY

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INTRODUCTION

By Nicholas Roerich

A RENAISSANCE of art is the evidence of the renaissance of a nation. In a declining country, art becomes only an abstract luxury. But when a country is in its full prowess, art becomes the real motive power of its people. Let us imagine the history of humanity without the treasures of beauty. We will then readily realize that the epochs are left meaningless, denuded of their soul. Without a manifestation of the spirit of the Beautiful, we shall remain amid the ugliness of death. And when we proclaim that beauty, art, is life, we speak about the coming evolution of beauty. Everything accomplished for art is an attainment for evolution. Every coworker in this field is already a hero.

Is it not our superb duty to reveal these true heroes of the nation to America? The coming generation should know precisely to whom it is indebted for its upliftment, and why it has been privileged to have for its uses all attainments and discoveries.

The life of an artist is not an easy one. But because of this very eternal struggle this life is always beautiful. Thirty years ago it was my privilege to introduce American art to Russia. Then, long before I had

adopted this country as my own, I already felt the virility and essential strength of its growing self-expression. And now, observing the fruitful development of American art, so multicolored, so manifold, I see how true was my first impression.

From the pure-hearted colonial expression, through such great masters as Sargent, Whistler, Ryder, Thayer, Homer, Bellows, Henri, to the present brilliant host of creative builders of the coming era of America, I feel how fundamental and dynamic has been the unfoldment of American art life.

It is great praise to this country that the roll of its creative workers cannot be expressed in one volume, but merits an entire great series, even with the briefest appreciations. As a beginning of this series of heroic builders of the future—the artists—we are happy to feel what a vast material is still before us and what a joy it is to show to the young generations the brilliant legion which has constructed the most beautiful achievements. Wherever art and knowledge flourish we may be enthusiasts. And in this joyful enthusiasm we may greet the true creative forces of our nation. A biography is not only a monument to the creator and the worker, but it is the best evocation for the youth to come. I am happy to greet the brilliant artists, to hail the essence of beautiful creative thought and to salute the young generation to which this creative thought shall bring its coming happiness.

AMERICAN ARTISTS

ROBERT WINTHROP CHANLER

Robert Winthrop Chanler represents to America an artist, an aspiring idealist and individual Bohemian, the traits which popular imagination associates with all creative geniuses. His art suggests more than all else a series of decorative *fantasias*, impressionistic character sketches and satirical sides of nature and life, each of which is a complete and independent improvisation. Not satisfied with what ordinarily meets the eye, he reaches toward the far magic of the sky, or dives into the shining depths of the sea, bringing forth fresh treasure troves of form and color. Strange beasts and fabulous birds appear at his beck and call. And one after another, these gleaming aquatic monsters and gorgeous avian marvels float or fly to the surface of his creative consciousness and assume their appointed places in a given composition or a colorful portrait series. It is all immensely stimulating and typically Chanleresque.

The one outstanding feature of Chanler's art is its primitive dynamic symbolism or spontaneous satire, which manifests itself now in the conventionalized nature of designs, then again in the rich color harmony or gorgeous combinations of gold and silver backgrounds. At first glance it may shock us with its radical

rhythm and bold chromatic harmonies which form the bases of a new decorative psychology; but soon that feeling gives place to a peculiar magic that seems to grow in potentiality with every successive consideration. A strange spirit seems to breathe through his variegated compositions and grotesque forms. They suggest musical, even more than pictorial, images. This is explained by the fact that Chanler considers painting in its essential, visualized music, and believes that painting's ultimate message lies in arousing phonetic images in the onlookers. Painting in its primitive terms means decoration—the arousing of pleasurable images in general. All folk arts are meant to be decorative: accordingly his best mediums of expression lie in screens, murals, panels, frescoes, stained glass windows and *premier coup* portraits, as his latest New York and Paris exhibitions have demonstrated.

According to Chanler, the origin of decorative art—and portrait painting—lies in the magic of the days before primitive man built a temple and created his gods. It was the idea of sorcery and spirits which inspired our barbaric ancestors to invent symbols, sacred designs, amulets, talismans, ikons and vestments for the occult or religious ceremonies. The idea of the spirit was intangible and could not be expressed in articulate words; therefore symbols were created and images drawn or carved. Out of those symbols and images evolved the folk arts. The caves of sorcerers were the forerunners of modern art studios. We infer from our

fairy tales and legends that those caves were engraved and decorated with all kinds of strange designs, images and colors, now depicting magic herbs, fearsome snakes, spirits or monsters, now the phases of some great event or calamity of nature. In all the secret doings and ceremonies of the ancient priests, there were certain symbols that expressed the meaning of the mystic forces of nature—divine spirits. All their ceremonies were impotent without symbols and drawn images. And thus the supposed potency of a symbolic design was the result of primordial esthetic thought—in subconscious decorative terms. Since the sacred design was capable of greater spiritual meaning than human speech, the imagination of primitive man endowed it with unlimited power, and out of the all-powerful magic symbols and images there developed, gradually, our modern decorative art and portrait painting. This is briefly the esthetic credo of Chanler.

Chanler's art is so interwoven with the mystic symbolism of the Egyptians and the enigmatic fantasy of the East, that it is necessary to view his works in the light of outstanding ethnographic events. It is a fact that the teachings of all mythologies and religions laid great stress on the importance of the proper symbol or image in a sacred ceremony, invocation, prayer, garment or sacred design. The magic rod of Moses, used in his miracles before Pharaoh, was *crux ansata*, the crossed bodies of a man and woman, which was also used by the Egyptian priests as a magic symbol in heal-

ing the sick. The same symbol was used in the famous talisman of Horus, to raise the dead. Later it became the Christian cross. Hieroglyphs, the oldest of alphabets, were essentially magic symbols, but became later the most essential elements in the succeeding folk arts.

Chanler believes firmly—and proves it in his paintings—that if a decorative panel, screen or portrait is deprived of symbolic meaning it automatically loses its intrinsic esthetic quality. For this reason—as interpreted by him—the ultimate end of painting is the symbolic appeal, which lends to it a lasting value and lifts it above the ordinary crafts. Chanler's metallic underlays, overlays, colored backgrounds and reliefs in gold or silver are executed with the idea of achieving a greater symbolic quality.

Chanler's symbolic design always suggests in some way or other, the emotional side of Nature's soul, and the sensuous force of his own emotions. Symbol is the veiled script of the sensuous messages of Nature. The best illustrations in this respect are his "Flames," an elaborate decorative panel in Gertrude Whitney's New York studio, and "Deep Sea Fantasy," a screen of six panels in the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

"Flames" is a symbolic picture of a sacred fire and human passions. From one aspect it may be regarded as the violent transformatory process of matter from one chemical compound into another; but in another sense, it suggests the subconscious desire of man's ego to absorb all the pleasures of the world. In doing so it

destroys itself, until, reaching the region of the sun-fire, the destructive phenomenon melts into a magic of cosmic regeneration—an allegoric reincarnation. "Flames" thus depicts the striving of Nature and the striving of the human soul, the melting process of matter and the melting process of human emotions at the same time. Though a picture of actual physical flame, it is also the picture of the spirit of flame, the abstract sensuous symbol of something primitively human.

In "Deep Sea Fantasy" we have an example of allegoric sensuous symbols from another angle. The picture depicts life on the bottom of the ocean—about a mile or so under water. In it Chanler's aquatic monsters suggest the elemental yet metaphysical love forces of Nature in their most demonstrative phase on the one hand, and the birth process of a new species on the other. This screen shows the original life spirit of Nature anxious to manifest itself in its primeval forms, thus producing those bizarre monsters of the ocean which, according to biological authorities, may have been the first living beings. It may mean the very cradle of all universal life, the original Paradise for æons of years before the appearance of the cave man; yet in another sense it may be the cradle of all our emotional fury, the visualized nakedness within our hearts. We see in it a display of fear, joy, passion and love. It is an allegoric fairy tale of the deep sea—full of pleasure and joy, as if all living beings in their very elemental manifestation were billing, cooing and flirting, and playing with

each other to the music of the waves. We almost hear the whirlpool of the dark depths, and feel the trembling sensations of primitive life. It is a work that penetrates to our intuition through its spontaneous virility. The longer we look at it, the more it evokes in us the painful and pleasurable emotions of something elemental and merciless, as Nature is. The sensuous symbols herein defined and refined become dynamic images of those elemental life forces outside and within ourselves, which we fear and love.

One of the peculiar tendencies of Chanler's art is to select out of all the imitative forms of the existing world the simplest aspects or the most characteristic features, and develop them as if in anticipation of Nature's development. In doing so Chanler employs sensuous symbols and intrinsic designs in all his works of art: various kinds of elemental picturesque beings—birds, octopi, fish, butterflies, magic flowers and monsters, ironic lines, primeval organic life that struggles for higher forms most violently. Throughout his works Chanler employs—like a composer—a definite *leit motif* and observes carefully the rules of a "pictorial rhythm." We see this best illustrated in his above-mentioned "Flames," "Avian Arabesques," a six-paneled screen owned by the late Mrs. John Sanford, and the "Astrological Fantasy," a screen owned by Gertrude Whitney.

As an American symbolist, Chanler's art differs in many ways from that of the East, which is predominantly symbolic. The divergence lies particularly in

Chanler's method of adding dynamic quality to the rhythmic, which at times becomes a pictorial syncopation—a typical New World idiom. This expresses itself especially in the nature of a kinetic line, a cosmopolitan concentration of the modern, shooting more or less through traditional forms ultimately becoming—what I expressed before—Chanleresque.

The *Americana* elements of Chanler's symbolism are so conspicuous that we cannot overlook the rôle they play in his art. In fact, the use of sensuous symbols in art is older than the verbal alphabet, but Chanler has added to it his individualistic American trait. Primordial man expressed his first pictorial ideas of beauty in symbols of cooing birds, magic flowers or other emblems of his most vital emotions, embroidered on his garments or painted on his weapons, utensils and body. The underlying ideas of all folk art patterns and architecture are outgrowths of primitive sexual symbols. Verbal language developed human intellect, but symbols were needed to develop the emotions: a sensuous or dynamic symbol is that magic medium which appeals directly to our intuitive faculties, thereby avoiding the translating agency of the intellect. Intuition—the faculty of reading symbols—is the real source of all direct esthetic transmissions. Like the ancient mystics, Chanler defines the general nature of art as being composed of three basically different allegoric characteristics: first, the symbol of the material or the bases of the composition; second, the symbol of the idea, the theme, or

the stem of the creation; and third, the symbol of ecstatic conception, or the flower of the beautiful—in other words, the character of the form, the idea of the theme, and the abstract image of love. Out of these three principles Chanler builds his interesting pieces of art—screens, panels, mural decorations and portraits. With a few exceptions his works all bear the stamp of his individual esoteric thought and his spontaneous stroke.

Chanler with his idiomatic symbolism has developed an individual style, something that contains the rudiments of the medieval East, yet connotes qualities distinctly American. Particularly noticeable is the dynamic tendency, which we find dominant in most of his best works. In his "Giraffes"—in the Museum du Luxembourg in Paris—this is evident in the upward shooting symmetric relation of the giraffes to the fantastic trees, while in Mrs. Whitney's panels and screens it is expressed in the kinetic lines of the fantastic designs and translucent colors, proclaiming a mystic fatalism and conveying an occult feeling of something powerful and mystic. Thus Chanler's symbolism differs from that of the East—which is negative and distinctly traditional—in most cases static, while his is positive and dynamic. Instead of having a floating (and so to say) horizontal tendency, his symbols try to shoot directly upward or downward. One feels a theme of action going through all his paintings, as if they were some sort of new, unknown films. For Chanler, flowers have eyes and ears, animals have roots and leaves. He not only puts his

fish in the water, but in the air, on the rocks and among the flowers—amid life in its every aspect. And strange to say, they look natural.

In defining Chanler's pictorial idiom as dynamic, we must acknowledge that its detailed description requires more space than a brief chapter of this kind can afford. Briefly expressed, it can be termed the cosmopolitan emotional imprint of an artist's individuality, which can be fully grasped only by cultured intuition—just as in natural objects emotional potentialities can be concealed and expressed in abstract art images by defying every articulate description. Chanler's art is an illustration of this esthetic truth. It is not Nature, but the Spirit of Nature that interests Chanler. It is not life but the spirit of life that his art displays. In his works, generally speaking, Chanler frequently employs the graceful Oriental curve, the fatalistic esoteric image of Nature. Tradition means little to him; the dynamic is everything. Dynamics in his vocabulary means the mystic forces of life and the soul, the elemental forces of action. In most of his symbolic or ironic designs we see, in the forces visualized, images of modern urban rush and action. It is the energy and not the object that is dominant in his art.

While the folk arts were built around an object—the secondary thing—in Chanler's symbolism everything is based on the intrinsic force of that object—the primary thing. Outstanding achievements of his symbolism are the floreate murals for the Colony Club, the

beautiful panels for Mrs. Whitney's studio, the mural decorations of the houses of W. R. Coe, W. K. Vanderbilt, Walter Lewisohn and Mrs. C. C. Rumsey; his previously mentioned screens and panels, and his own house, the House of Fantasy, at 147 East Nineteenth Street, New York.

Chanler's life as an artist, a Bohemian and an idealist represents a series of reactions against conventions, social and national standards of which Dr. Christian Brinton writes so graphically:

"A descendent of imposing sequence of colonial governors, generals, pioneers and millionaires, Chanler has succeeded in affirming his individuality and esthetic credo despite every obstacle. Surmounting in turn the inherited handicaps of family traditions and material affluence, he has won his way to a virile autonomy of thought and action which have made him a legendary figure of New York."

The dramatic steps by which Robert Chanler made his career as an artist and became such an outstanding art colony figure in New York and Paris are as epic as they are picturesque and full of contrasts. Dr. Brinton continues: "A boyhood passed in almost feudal seclusion at Rockeby, the family estate in Dutchess County, New York, was followed by a score of years spent in Europe, traveling, studying and painting in various continental capitals, with special emphasis upon Rome and Paris. It was the young man's original intention to become a sculptor, and with this end in view he began

his apprenticeship in Rome under Mariano Benlliure. A brief course of training in the atelier of Falguiere in Paris was, however, followed by his renouncing clay for crayon and color. The ensuing four years were divided between Julien's, the Academie Carlorossi, and the tutelage of that arch academician, Jean-Leon Gérôme.

"It was the day of studio realism, of painstaking copying of old masters, and the painting of conventional nudes in the approved professorial north light. Such names as Manet, and even the serene, idyllic Puvis were anathema to those in authority. Disgusted with the sterile instruction of atelier and academy, Chanler proceeded to Italy, where he reveled in the fluent decorative harmonies of Pinturicchio in the Borgia apartments of the Vatican, the memorable frescoes by Benozzo Gozzoli in the Palazzo Riccardi, Florence, and kindred triumphs of Renaissance taste and invention. Convinced that he had started on the wrong pathway, he returned to Paris in order to begin his artistic career afresh. He set to work with the ardor of a true proselyte. He was not handicapped by timidity. The result of his initial effort was the Peacock Room, a suite of four shimmering red and gold panels, the central motif being his favorite bird with proudly distended tail. This was completed in 1900."

After several years of study, experimenting and working abroad, Chanler returned to America in 1902 and decided to start his artistic career as a decorative artist and mural painter. His first works were a series of mural

panels and screens executed for the residences of W. K. Vanderbilt and Lloyd Warren. As his family disliked the idea of his becoming an artist, they urged him to enter upon a political career. Yielding to these outside influences he joined the Dutchess County Democratic Association and was elected sheriff of the county. In New York social circles he is still called "Sheriff Bob." After serving two years as sheriff, Chanler returned to his studio in New York to devote the rest of his life to the art of painting.

"Silhouetted against the drab, factual background of everyday existence, Robert Winthrop Chanler presents a striking figure both as man and artist," writes Dr. Brinton. "Throughout more than half a century of his existence he has resolutely defied discipline. He stands solidly against the craven, sinister conspiracy of contemporary society which tends to defeat the salutary variety of nature. At once, full of refined sensibility and Rabelaisian ribaldry, sardonic or jovial, and gargantuan of temper, Chanler typifies the ascendancy of the individual over soulless formalism, the right of sovereign man to be free, and to follow the dictates of his taste and appetites.

"Securely entrenched in his House of Fantasy, surrounded by books, his works and a few choice friends and familiars, he joyously abandons himself to creative expression."

JOHN E. COSTIGAN

THE ART of John E. Costigan strikes a refreshing note in the American esthetic symphony: it is brilliant, stimulating, spontaneous, classic and yet modern in spirit and execution. His canvases evoke the feeling of lovely nature, idyllic rural life and inspiring poetry. They emanate something fragrant and musical—like the songs and ballads of the legendary troubadours.

When I first saw Costigan's paintings in the New York galleries—his "Peeling Apples," "Winter Shadows" and "Landscape with Flowers"—they reminded me strongly of such Dutch masters as Paul Potter and David Teniers, whose magnificent nature pictures in the Hermiage in Leningrad and in the museums of Holland have cast a spell on me. A strong Flemish-Dutch strain runs through the individual style of Costigan's paintings. They are works of a profound student of nature and a lyric poet who has sung his soul into brilliant canvases. Like the songs of Schubert his paintings are spontaneous sparks of the soil: they have a melodic design.

Costigan's pictorial style reminds me of the style of Ivan Turgeniev's novels and stories—descriptive naturalism in its noblest aspects. Ralph Flint writes of him graphically in the "International Studio":

"Thematically Mr. Costigan is as simple as he is technically involved. He has an almost Wordsworthian attitude toward the natural beauties that surround him. He puts their simplicities into strokes that sing with the same earnest emotions as do the phrases of the English poet. His art approaches, too, the deepness of Millet's pastorals, save that the Frenchman's melancholy is absent. Costigan celebrates the beauty of living humbly and contentedly, close to Mother Earth, in a sort of self-appointed peasantry. He is a pictorial harvester bringing into the storehouse the fruits of his observation and meditation, gathered on the daily round of his little world. His wisdom has led him to find at his very threshold the essentials of his calling, and his penetration has led him to make the most of that which lay at hand.

"It is in the woods that this painter finds his happiest subject matter. There, among the tangled branches and brushwood, he sets himself to study the endless variations of sunlight and shadow as the touch of the seasons revolves the pageantry of leaf and light. It is here that the need for a special technique must have come to the painter. To represent the wonder of sunlight in its soft descent through countless layers of leafy boughs, when individual form almost disappears in the general translucency, or to seize the prismatic glitter of sun-shafts streaking through some bosky dell when twig and trunk, leaf and petal each have their high-light and shadow were an impossibility in a photographic sense. And so,

in emulation of the feathery fairy-like scenes within the woods, a glancing, interlacing way of painting evolved within the studio; and—*mirabile dictu*—the transference of sunlit wood to canvas was an accomplished fact.

"It is seldom, however, that Mr. Costigan leaves his foreground untenanted. The usual occupants of these vantage points are his family and flock. In earlier years the figure of a woman, a struggling file of sheep or goats at her feet as she wandered through the woods, appeared times without number; her reddish skirt and dark bodice became a familiar accent in his compositions. Since the arrival of an heir to the Costigan homestead, the many guises of motherhood have engaged his brush and now as the heroine of the story roams the woodland paths she bears on her shoulders the little son or holds him high above her head in fond affection, quite unmindful of the straying animals. He treats his dumb companions with the same pictorial interest as his wife and child, and the sheep and goats and cows are invariably as intimately rendered as they. Mr. Costigan's paintings will never cause the cataloguer much difficulty in the way of chronological sequence, for in them his menage in all its stages is on record. Lock, stock and barrel, the Costigan household stands revealed.

"It is but natural that Mr. Costigan should feel the deepest admiration for John Singer Sargent's 'Hermit,' perhaps the greatest rendition of a woodland interior in all art. This famous canvas, which hangs in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art,

is a point of pilgrimage whenever he comes to town. He places this Sargent as his favorite painting, and goes to the Museum to stand before this consummate summary of forest forms in rapt attention, as still and observant as if he were his own sun-shot glades, learning bit by bit to make his own hold on art and nature more secure.

"In patient, studious hours of closest attention has the way unfolded to this painter. Like Turner, he likes to sit hour by hour watching some tricky piece of foliage as it turns in the wind or some point in the brook where it slips out of its winter sheathing of ice with quaint and unexpected turn. This is what gives his seemingly unstudied tapestries of color their authenticity. In design, too, Mr. Costigan is well versed. The canvases in his show at Rehn's Gallery were strong in unified and unusual pattern, several of them indicating a growing sense of subject matter and composition. He takes his place, therefore, among the most interesting of contemporary American painters because of his pioneering along a new direction in representation, for having evolved an individual and telling technique to meet a direct pictorial need, for making his own Barbizon and dwelling a happy master therein, and for the deep and abiding sense of beauty with which he invests his canvases.

"Costigan remains a unique figure among contemporary American painters, in the poignant pastorality of his art and in the manner of pigmentation which he employs. While there are landscapists without number in

every section of the United States sincerely bent to their various pictorial tasks, there probably is none dwelling in greater *rapport* with natural beauty than he. Like some Attic shepherd wandering quietly with his charges through gentle copses and meadows and sitting happily beside melodious streams through uncounted hours, unconscious, beyond the bare facts, that a world of contentious interests is shuttling through time and space just over the edge of his horizon, this twentieth-century tender of sheep moves about his beloved homestead in daily contemplation of leaf and flower, ripple and cloud, flock and family, noting each subtle aspect of change and growth against some future occasion in the studio, when a new picture shall come to pass.

"Since his appearance at the Babcock Galleries some eight years ago Mr. Costigan has grown steadily in ability and reputation. His style has ceased to be a matter of wonder or even concern, and the success of his first one-man show, held at the Rehn Galleries, was not surprising to those who had watched him develop from year to year. Of course some inherent need for particular accent or quality lies back of the peculiar way in which he manipulates his medium, for such habits of procedure are but externalized processes of pictorial reasoning. From the very beginning, when attempting to sketch in oil pigments, he was drawn toward the idea of loading his paint with a palette knife in order to secure a greater body of tone and a wider range of effect. He developed a technique, based on the *impasto*

of the palette knife, which gradually grew into an exuberant loading of the pigments with the brush in the vibratory manner of the Impressionists.

"Closely examined, the Costigan canvases present a puzzling surface to the layman. Hillocks of paint rise and fall like some raised topographical map, with channels and grooves darting here and there in apparently wild confusion. Let the painting, however, be seen at a proper distance, and these corrugations blend into a seemingly smooth construction where order and reason prevail. But this lavish display of pigment is not made with any desire to *épater le bourgeois,* nor is it through any personal predilection of the artist for Penelope's classic contrariness that he raises his promontories and headlands of paint, only to have them sink away when the picture is seen at a normal range. A distinct purpose lies imbedded in this Costigan technique which gives his paintings a wonderful carrying power. When seen beside pictures done in the usual flat manner, the coruscating, shimmering surfaces which he achieves with his heaped-up pigments are particularly effective and quite justify his technical procedure."

Such a graphic summary of a brilliant critic covers practically all the technical sides of this original young American artist who in his early forties is merely ascending the steps toward his ultimate achievements. Born in Providence, R. I., February 29, 1888, John E. Costigan is a self-taught painter, who, however, was elected a member of the National Academy in 1928.

His paintings have been acquired by the Brooklyn Museum, Chicago Art Institute, Phillips Memorial Gallery in Washington, Los Angeles Museum of Art, Delgado Museum in New Orleans, Rhode Island School of Design, New York National Arts Club, Nashville Museum of Art, Tennessee, Connecticut Agricultural College, and numerous private collections of America.

What has made Costigan such an outstanding American painter is his deep philosophical grasp of nature, life and art. All his canvases betray the rhythm of a man who has achieved his creations not by means of mere studious technique and brilliant craftsmanship but by means of meditation, insight and deep thought about his subject matter. One of the great drawbacks of contemporary artists is their negligence or inability to meditate on their creations. All that the bulk of artists aspire for is to succeed by means of external effects or to dazzle the onlookers by means of novelties in vogue. This is not so with Mr. Costigan, whose pictures betray the results of prolonged contemplation and symbolic thought.

Whereas the watchword of the materialistic society of to-day is success by means of cleverness, and a supply of what the public wants, the real genius is and remains a hermit, a poet of seclusion, simple and profound at the same time. He pours out his inner self in his created images regardless of whether they are fashionable or not. Such are the works of Mr. Costigan. You feel in them an echo of their creator, an intellectual

or emotional message which is soothing to look upon and which keeps that inner appeal continually. One of the test points of esthetic values is their lasting emotional appeal, which all the immortal masterpieces maintain. A real work of art never ages. In fact age merely emphasizes its intrinsic beauty. As wines and perfumes gain with time, and grow more delicious or intense with advancing years, thus art works acquire an inner appeal as they age. Costigan's paintings will gain in that occult appeal as they grow older.

Costigan paints that which he feels—nature, woodland life, brooks, rural poetry and rustic charms, all of which have become his second nature. His pictures are by no means photographic copies of delightful landscapes, mere academic paintings of pastoral views. No. They are animated images of nature in the artist's soul. They do not convey objects, correctly drawn and colorfully executed; they convey animated nature visualized on the canvas.

Another remarkable feature of Costigan's art is its display of nature, so intensified that our urbanized mind is forced to look at it and inhale its individual intensity which the artist has managed to work out by means of his unusual technique in applying the paints to the canvas. Our senses dulled by the contemporary mechanical life, require intensified means to shake them up and make them take notice of something different from our concrete city streets, automobiles, glaring posters and lights. The ancient Byzantine ikon painters employed

the same kind of intensified metallic effects in their art to shake up the minds of the feudal worshipers, affected by the armor of the knights and the constant fear of spear and sword.

The contemporary city man has grown indifferent to the charms and magic of nature. Pictures of rural life seem to him almost like visions of some *fata morgana*, exotic and strange. He no longer cares for any melodic expressions as jazz has dulled his senses, and noises make him indifferent to anything poetic and romantic. It is therefore salutary and encouraging when artists like Costigan appear and inject a note of the soil.

In order to continue to sing the songs of the soil in his color-poems Costigan has remained a true ruralist and lives secluded in the woods of Orangeburg, N. Y. "There, with his little family, he leads a truly pastoral existence among his sheep and goats and paint-pots," writes the distinguished art critic. "After a preliminary wandering among the schools and bazaars of the art world, this young American artist followed the promptings of his nature and took shelter among the woods and meadows of rural New York, where he might spend his days and nights in studying the seasons in their voluminous beauty. And perhaps the secret of his success lies in just this devotion to duty—to the painter's task of communing ever more deeply with nature until the mind becomes 'divinely bent to meditation.' "

Speaking in worldly terms, Mr. Costigan has received the Mrs. Julius Rosenwald prize of five hundred

dollars in 1920, the Shaw one thousand dollar purchase in 1925, National Arts Club medal and three hundred dollar prize in 1925, Logan Medal fifteen hundred dollars in 1927, Speyer three hundred dollar P. N. A. D. in 1928, and many other honors. His paintings have gained the gradually increasing recognition of art lovers and museums both at home and abroad. His has been a natural and modest progress by means of the increasing intrinsic value of his paintings and not by means of artificial publicity or the usual contemporary market tricks.

The Costigan paintings are and remain genuine gems of American art simply because they are the expressions of an individualist, a poet, a thinker and an accomplished master of the brush. They mirror America in the light of its variegated nature, in the light of folklore and fairy tales, along the line of a Thoreau, an Emerson, a Walt Whitman and a Mark Twain—those eminent sons of the soil.

LEON DABO

In the ranks of contemporary American artists Leon Dabo occupies a uniquely distinguished place. A painter, a poet, a philosopher and a seer—he belongs to hyperboreans, the men of legend and the dwellers in the fabled Ultima Thule, the Land of Mystery. Such, in fact, are all the real artists and spiritual creators of the world. With Dabo it is not the tangible, physical painting, the academic pictorial effect, but the metaphysical message—the esthetic beyondness—that counts.

Since so many illustrious writers and brilliant art critics of America and Europe have devoted many pages to the description and definition of his color creations, it would be well to present quotations from some of them at this point.

John Nilson Laurvik, formerly art critic of the *New York Evening Post* and the *International Studio*, later the director of the Museum of Fine Arts in San Francisco, sees in Dabo a transcendental spirit at one with the inner essence of things.

"Leon Dabo," he writes, "has dramatized the soul of nature. His canvases give a perfect illusion of its vast spaces, evoking awe and reverence as in the presence of the mountains, in the midst of great wildernesses and

on the boundless waters of the sea. . . . He has so perceived and recorded the primal essence of nature as to make his tree and sky and bit of land assume the full and majestic proportions of the universe. In the presence of his canvases one is awed, one's soul filled to the brim with wonder, and for the time being one is transported to the pinnacle of the world with all its kingdoms at one's feet. . . . These visions of loveliness evoke the same reverence, the same devotional bowing of the head in the presence of the great mystery as must surely have moved our first parents when they beheld, amazed, the first dawn spread its saffron-tinted, silver-streaked wings on that early morning of creation. . . .

"Dabo's perception of the hidden beauty of life lends a new significance to his portrayal of familiar scenes. The Hudson and East Rivers as seen at night with their ghostly sentinels of skyscrapers, fog-shrouded, or revealed in the saffron-gray light of early morning, when every towering building takes on an air of mystery and romance—as depicted in the paintings of Dabo these witnesses of the commonplace are made indisputable heralds of the grandeur and majesty of the world. Thus Dabo translates the language of an effete metropolis into cosmic speech . . . As life is never inert, so his paintings vibrate with light, expanding beyond the puny confines of a room, until the rumble in the street below seems the thundering voice of mighty Jove, and all of life and death and joy is encompassed within the narrow limits of that frame.

"In the work of Leon Dabo are true dignity, strength wedded to grace, the expression of an austere nature, strongly aspiring . . . One finds in his canvases no accusing finger, nothing but joyous serene hands stretched out gladly, offering surcease of sorrow. This is where they differ essentially from the troubled spirit of the times, made vocal in the dreams of Ibsen, and in Maeterlinck's sad searchings of the nether world of man's soul. . . Dabo expresses adequately for the first time in modern art that wonderful sense of dignity and repose known as the Greek spirit . . . In this sense his work is not epochal—it is of all time."

Paul Vallorbe, the French critic, writing of Dabo as a colorist, says:

"The extreme delicacy of the coloring with Leon Dabo comes from the study he has made of the laws of optics and the decomposition of light. No one has known better than he how to distinguish the effects of shaded or contrasted tints. No one has made out with a keener eye the varied, complex, elusive combinations, that change a cloud at the horizon, a sun-ray reflected in the sea, the flight of swans over a lake into great or exquisite poems that stir on our hearts a long-remembered emotion. At the same time, color is always with him subordinate to the emotion. No vulgar modeling, none of those trickeries by which a painter may try to give us the cheap illusion of reality, of relief. There is an atmosphere of dream, of poetry, of caressing and profound seduction.

"Thus he delights in rare tones, pale dawns, the fugi-

tive disappearance of rays of light at the approach of evening, those indefinable impressions of twilight when the waves are united to the lingering light in the sky by the diffusion of vapors on the horizon. The violent and deliberately brutal are absent from his works. It is the impression of a dream, a great calm. He has a subtle love for gray blues, fading lights, dying roses, golden fogs and for all the delicate and melting colors that translate the reflection of light in veiled waters, mists on the ocean, and the thousand and one undiscernible tints and tones where the imagination of the ancients saw the illusive affinities between nature and myth.

"Leon Dabo's talent is original, subtle, rare, and of an extreme distinction. . . ."

Professor Paul Clemen, German critic and professor of art history at the University of Bonn, discusses the fundamentals of Dabo's art.

"Dabo's painting," Professor Clemen writes, "is broad, but one never sees the brush-marks; his color is in planes, but it is never 'painty.' It is always luminous and transparent and, above everything, tries to reproduce air and water in their purity and fluidity. Compared with the spotted fever which has become an international epidemic in the world of art, his direct and yet discreet manner has an unspeakably restful and refined effect. Yet Dabo's brush is that of a virtuoso; a single stroke draws a whole figure; two twists of his brush, a soft flattening out, a thin broadening, and the perfect impression is there.

"What in the last instance produces the effect of restfulness is the architectural structure of his pictures. The secret is that the law underlying this structure never obtrudes itself unpleasantly. The light-effect is always closely and carefully calculated. The setting, the trees, ships and human forms are necessary in their place and only in that place. The whole vibration of light in the fog and its struggle with darkness is conceived out of nature and painted into the pictures. That lends them the strange life which they seem to radiate in different lights and at various hours of the day in their numerous phases, so that things mysterious seem to pass within them, and out of the shadows gradually seem to rise outlines and living forms.

"Dabo's work is an uninterrupted hymn upon the overwhelming majesty and the silent beauty of nature. His canvases are wonderful color harmonies with vast horizons. He paints a poet's vision of hidden things. His inner vision reproduces nature impressions, simplified and enforced. They affect one as transfigurations."

John Spargo, English critic and essayist, calls Leon Dabo a "spiritual impressionist."

"Dabo," he writes, "paints the landscape as one for whom it has been transfigured by some vision. All the petty things are wiped out of his memory, with all that is harsh, brutal and unlovely, and there remain only the immensity of air and sky, and the beauties of light and color—subtle miracles of grace and splendor which only the poet's vision can discern. He paints his impres-

sions of the infinitude of life, the boundless, uncharted universe, vibrant with life and motion. He cares little for the features of Nature, but everything for her character. He is a seer gazing at the secrets of the great universal life and striving to reveal them through color and line . . .

"Before such paintings one stands—awed into reverence. One feels the solemn grandeur of illimitable space, the mystery of light, just as one may, in the presence of Nature, amid her deepest silences. To feel that all is pulsating with life, from deep to deep, from vaulted sky to undulating sea, is to experience something of the wonder, the soul-intoxication which Dabo must have felt in his work . . . What charm and spiritual exaltation he expresses in the great vaporous, radiant clouds piled into fantastic shapes in a framework of dark, lowering sky! And what shimmering veils of mist, hung between earth and sky, translucent, living, woven of gold and amethyst and pearl, spectral, and suggesting the Divine immanence! The feeling produced by these paintings is impressively devotional."

Bliss Carman, Canadian poet, considers Leon Dabo a "poet in color."

Writing of Dabo's paintings, he says: "I stand before them and am carried away by the same emotions which enrapture me when I stand before nature. Here first of all are space and amplitude and solemnity and wonder, the strange vast beauty of the earth, in whose presence I sink into insignificance. The beauty of nature is never

obtrusive, yet it pervades everything. The beauty of these representations of nature, also, is never assertive, yet always potent.

"I am not dazzled by the craftsman's wizardry, for that is lost in his sincerity. I am touched by the simple awe and impressiveness of the universe. I perceive that here a mortal must have looked in the face of nature and, with profound sensitiveness to her spiritual signification, turned and recorded in enduring color the delight that rose within him. All else is reduced to a minimum. Houses and figures and trees and boats are here, but they seem as small and secondary as they do in the real out-of-doors. The vastness of the sky is always present, and the ego appears infinitesimal in the cosmos."

To Benjamin de Casseres, critic and journalist, Dabo is a "creative wondersmith."

"Leon Dabo," he says, "is a spiritual descendant of William Blake and he stands in the same relation to his time as Rodin and Maeterlinck do to theirs. He is being used by the same Spirit—the Spirit that comes cowled and masked into the world ever and again to announce the miraculous nature of the world, the blasting mystery—blasting in its enormity—of light, air, water, the human form, imagination; the unutterable awe that a fleck of light upon a russet leaf evokes; this Spirit has seized on Dabo for its body and put the paint brush in his hand, not to paint pictures, but to reveal once more

the immortal nature of beauty and the eternality and omnipresence of life. . . .

"I never knew this universe in which I dwelled until Leon Dabo recreated it for me, for in him Nature found a brain and Space its lord."

Edwin Markham, poet, pronounces Leon Dabo "a poet in paint, a musician in color."

"As I look on his mystic landscapes," he says, "I seem to be reading an aerial poem of Shelley, or following a shadowy drama of Maeterlinck, or listening to a dream-woven nocturne of Chopin. The Hudson River of Dabo is not on any atlas; it is not the Hudson of commerce, not the Hudson of the commuter with eyes glued to the stock report.

"It is the Hudson of romantic lure and vision. It is the Hudson of the faerie lights and the sibylline fogs. Dabo brings to us the river in her eerie hours when the water is brightening under the first touch of morning, or when she is darkening softly under the coming of the cryptic night. Leon Dabo is one of the authentic priests of beauty, one of the heaven-sent revealers of the forgotten wonder of the world."

James William Pattison, late Director of the Chicago Art Institute, finds "magnetism" in the work of Dabo.

"There is a force called 'personal magnetism.' Dabo has this magnetism in his painting . . . Color is not red, yellow and blue. The effect of color upon us is like that personal magnetism which we cannot explain, though we feel it so distinctly. Mr. Dabo's color is

peculiar, original, soul-moving, but difficult to analyze. He sees unusual combinations of tints in nature, but these tints are his servants. While true to nature's colors, he commands these servants to do his bidding. He is the unspoiled child of Genius, and cannot help doing what his gracious parent dictates, and it is dictated to him that he combine colors in his own strange way—true and still different from the color of others."

Amelia von Ende, critic and litterateur, sees in Leon Dabo "a personality to be viewed entirely apart from any school, party or movement."

She writes: "The art of Leon Dabo bears its own justification within itself and to be appreciated need not be compared with the work of any other man. Nor does it avail to investigate its sources. Suffice it to say, that this artist makes no attempt at reproduction, faithful as such, but re-creates from within what he knows of nature's moods and their relation to his inner self . . .

"There is nothing mundane about the art of Leon Dabo; the world in which he lives has little share in his creations. His mind dwells apart from the dissonant grandeur, the crass contrasts, the luring lights and lurking shadows of the great city. He loves to take his stand at some distance from the panorama, and watch it with the mind of the philosopher and the eye of the artist. He assures his perspective; then he melts the rays of blinding glamor, that come to him across the river, in the crucible of his creative spirit and throws upon the

canvas a vision of phantom houses on a phantom shore. . . ."

Anatole le Braz, the Breton poet, paints a word-picture of the paintings of Dabo:

"Leon Dabo's works are quintessence, essential oil, refined art and in a flagon of pure gold very little essence—enough to perfume an age! Made of a million flowers slain! His works are hymns to nature. They are skies with vermilion mists exhaling homage and praise as from a censer, marshes of melancholy, rivers of peace and forgiveness, fairy spectacles of land and water, Alleluias of light through buildings, ships and water, sung by two choruses alternating in rays of sun and shadow."

The foregoing commentaries on Leon Dabo's work have been culled by the writer from among a mass of critical articles and reviews that have grown up around the man and his message. But they do not reveal his complete personality. For the man is many-sided. Apart from the appeal of his art, Leon Dabo is rarely gifted and distinguished—a linguist who speaks in many languages and in many dialects; a scholar who has delved into the abstruse principles of the cosmos; an orator whose lectures on philosophy and music and art have been heard in most of the great institutions of learning in America and Europe; an artist whose paintings are to be seen in the most distinguished museums and art galleries of the world—from the Metropolitan in New York to the Imperial Museum in Tokio: from the Lux-

embourg in Paris to the National Gallery in Ottawa. It remains now to give a glimpse of the early environment and training of this dynamic personality.

Leon Dabo was born in the old French settlement of Grosse Pointe, near Detroit, Michigan, in 1874. His father was a man of learning and culture, a professor of esthetics and a classical scholar. Apart from the "three R's" acquired at the little village school, young Dabo's education was conducted at home by his father, who included Latin, French, history and drawing in the curriculum. The Dabo library contained a small but choice selection of books and the boy read widely—Homer and the Greek dramatists in French translation; in mysticism, the writings of Boehme, Ruysbroeck, Breughel, Novalis; in religion, Augustine and Chateaubriand.

At the age of sixteen, on his father's death, Dabo left home for New York. There he entered the employment of the famous firm of Ecclesiastical Artists, J. and R. Lamb. Here he learned the rudiments of glass painting and cutting. Shortly afterwards, he became attached to the studio of John La Farge. This was the beginning of a close friendship which continued until La Farge's death. La Farge, who has been referred to by that sensitive artist, Maximilian Fisher, as the only American "Old Master," not only became the boy's employer, but also constituted himself guide in his studies and reading. A year or so later, when Dabo decided to pursue his studies in France, La Farge gave him letters of intro-

duction and recommendation to a number of distinguished French artists, among them Puvis de Chavannes.

With slender resources, but with a thorough knowledge of French to compensate, Dabo found work in Paris with a firm of church decorators. In the evenings he attended the classes of the École des Arts Décoratifs, studying ornament and architecture, and on Sundays he drew from life at the Academie Colarossi. Later, he enrolled at the Sorbonne. In the meantime, he had become an architectural draughtsman and renderer and could afford to study part-time at the Beaux Arts under Tony Robert Fleury. It was at this period that he came into more intimate contact with Puvis de Chavannes, in whom he recognized the guiding mind of his future studies.

These were the days of intellectual battle. The Impressionists, led by Manet and Renoir, stood with Emile Zola at the head of a new movement. While Dabo admitted the open air school—in fact, painted as they did with high colors—his classical training, and perhaps also a certain delicacy and sense of the rare and remote, prevented him from regarding this form of Impressionism as his expression. With Puvis de Chavannes it was different—here were dignity, order, logic, a profound science, keen draughtsmanship and a new vision. In addition, de Chavannes—like John La Farge—was an intense lover of the antique, which appealed far more to Dabo than the painting of Paris bars and café nymphs.

In the middle nineties Dabo went to Munich with a view to pursuing his studies at the Academy, but the German academic tradition and the art of Knaus, Leibel and the successors of the Kaulbach cult repelled him. He journeyed to Italy. In Florence it was Botticelli's siren song that made him at once an admirer and a student of the *quattrocento*. For three years he remained in Italy observing, copying in the galleries, and painting small landscapes of the Umbrian Hills. From there he proceeded to Nancy, where he spent a year studying color with Emile Lauge, the physicist. Then he went to London. This step proved to be the turning point in his career. For in the British Museum he had the opportunity to study a unique collection of Chinese paintings, and the impression they made on him gave the impetus to his own individual art.

While the parentage of Dabo's art is Chinese, in that his work is deliberately composed and in that he uses only two or three masses, the wheels of his mechanism are of an infinite fineness and an extreme rarity. Two parallel forces are apparent in his paintings; one of them is visible to the casual observer—the sea, a wave, a cloud in the sky, a sail on the horizon; the other floats in the limbo of the inconscient—the light and shade of mystery wherein the seer and the initiate may discern the spiritual life of the work.

A painting by Dabo is a precise work. It is not to be believed that he composes his symphonies haphazardly —that his mental concept and his exact intuition are

not finely harmonized at every moment of the creative process. Being descriptive of his soul, his paintings are an attempt to translate in line and color the profound life of the heart, those infinitely small evocations of the soul, so sensitive that only the most rare and fugitive color arrangements can suggest them. Yet these notations are precise, more precise than words; because a color note, being abstract, enshrines many experiences, many meanings. If color fails in this expression, the painting fails. It is not painting.

Dabo has an aristocratic disdain for those orgies of paint lately so much in vogue. "Painting," he says, "no matter what the subject depicted, must never offend the eye, must always charm, and must always be well-bred." That, I see exemplified in his own work, which is always and fundamentally the essence of sobriety and refinement. Instead of piling up his colors he separates their personalities or he delicately unites them, without impinging on their proper nature. A finesse of *taste* permeates all his work. He almost, one might say, carries it to excess, sacrificing if need be other elements of his art, but he realizes the sacrifice as inevitable for his color scale.

The harmonies of Dabo, the diversity of combinations which he obtains with few elements, are distinguished by a species of simplicity, by a solidity and conciseness which we do not find until we return to the Chinese classics. There are at times harmonies vague and undetermined, even tormented, sought for, and yet

with Dabo they take on their place, for any attempt to correct them, to effect the slightest modification, would result in the collapse of the whole color edifice.

Dabo may paint a hundred canvases of the Hudson in mist, yet his Hudson is not the Hudson we know, but a Hudson in Greece or in Thrace or in a dream—a visionary Hudson. It is those rare moments when we see Nature as she is—as Poetry—that Dabo paints. He suggests mystery and the invisible and he achieves, as it were, through allusion, which often entails obscurities. At times the condensation is clear; at others, it is dark from disquieting light studded with gems. For diamonds have intermittent fires.

After all, lines and colors are extenuated with the fatigue of saying ever the same thing, and the painter regards them as signs which by the planes they take, by their alliance with others or their opposition to them, evoke new emotions, unexpected meanings. In Dabo's paintings all is ellipsis, inversion, deduction, reflection in mirrors of gardens unseen. The excessive foreshortening of ideas and images in which the painter takes pleasure creates special optics. That is why we must bring new eyes, a new sense of vision, to Dabo's work—eyes that have lost the memory of all paintings hitherto seen. Then does the striking effect compel us to enter within and find ourselves.

Dabo's art has been compared with that of the French poet, Stephane Mallarmé. The analogy probably lies in the fact that both artists never cease to put a veil between

the world and themselves—and the azure haunts them. Dubois says that Poe gave to Mallarmé the formula of poems, the idea that a subterranean current of thought, invisible, indefinite, should pervade them. This is equivalent to saying that a work of art should provoke thought by an expression at once precise and multiple; or, that a work of art should have at one and the same time several superimposed meanings. This is perhaps the surest characteristic of great creations.

Take one of Dabo's well-known canvases—"The Cloud" of the Metropolitan Museum. What spiritual airiness, and yet what trembling passion, and within the huge mass of cloud what freedom, and yet what expressive restraint! It is a magnificent language, of a marvelous sobriety and clarity, not one touch in excess, not a brush imprint but is infallible for the expression; and over all, this nervous precision, this passionate exactitude, this towering freedom!

It is above all a melodic freedom. His color planes are fluid and a-tremble with life, and in each separate passage there is a harmonization creating emotions to the point where the conjunctions of a vigorous *empâtement* and a subtle modulation, with a grandiose brutality reach infallible gradations of lights and shadows, imperceptible shivers of thought.

This is an art unique in its hyperesthetic sensitiveness, more sensitive perhaps, in this respect, than either Whistler or de Chavannes, not satisfied with the modern

color scale, but returning to the primitives, rebellious against the heretical disharmony of present-day painting.

To conclude, the art of Leon Dabo is born of the spirit. It is of another world. It humbles while it exalts. It beckons towards the Infinite. It pierces the veil for the seeing soul, blinding it by a faint reflection of the celestial rays that proceed from the Eternal Creator. Touch but the hem of its garment and virtue will go out to you. View it with a soul steeped in materiality and a sign shall not be given you. As Laurvik truly says: "Whatsoever thou callest in the woods that wilt thou be answered, and what you bring with you to Dabo's paintings that will you carry away with you, and in greater measure."

HOWARD EVERETT GILES

HOWARD EVERETT GILES, in his highly sensitized creations, is a pioneer exponent of dynamic symmetry, of which Jay Hambidge has been considered the founder in America. The theory of the dynamic principle of art is a new esthetic feature and belongs, by its ethnological right, to American thought and genius. Since Mr. Giles has made it a paramount issue of his creative career, it deserves a nation-wide, nay universal, attention.

"To sum up Mr. Giles' art in a few words, he has two large tendencies: to philosophize over particular beings or events, enlarging their importance until they become symbols; and to compose, upon a theme suggested by nature tunes in color and form," writes Mr. Walter Gutman, speaking rather generally and abstractly of the particular note. Since I have treated the same question more particularly in my work "The Art of Music," Volume X, as applied to music and dance, I will briefly point out the features applying to painting.

The dynamic trait is an inherent American characteristic, an idiomatic New World note, lacking in the esthetic expressions of the Old World. It is traceable in American music, painting, poetry, dance, language and, above all, in American architecture. Its origin

dates back to the beginning of American industry, urban ideology, and all that cosmopolitan kinetic spirit which gives to everything American an appearance of *action.* Our publishers look for stories with *action;* our theatrical producers question first of all whether a play has *action;* and our tempo of life is a *presto prestissimo.* It is, therefore, only natural that our art should reflect that idiomatic trait of our national character.

The chief characteristic of the American mind is to condense expressions and ideas into their shortest forms—an outspoken tendency of intensification. This is most evident in the syncopated style of its music, in its synthetic language and in its compact upward shooting architecture. It reflects the scope of a cosmic view—a new spiritual note of evolution. Like American "ragtime" or American slang, an American skyscraper is the result of an impressionistic imagination. Undeveloped in its present form, it nevertheless speaks a language of a cosmopolitan, active race and defines the fundamentals of a new dynamic art. Mr. Giles with his dynamic theories is on the right path of a sweeping new evolutionary experiment—defining the esthetic idiom of action.

Instead of having a floating, graceful and, so to speak, horizontal tendency like the esthetic images of the Old World, the American beauty is exploding, kinetic and—if possible—perpendicular. It shoots directly upwards and denies every tradition. The pictures and designs of Giles illustrate the argument. His figures and drawings

of objects impress an onlooker as being charged with unknown energy of action. They vibrate in their potentiality—an achievement that may be called "Gilesquian." The underlying motives of such a tendency are not traditional or racial but cosmographic. While a traditional nationalistic art—like that of the Latins, Anglo-Saxons, Scandinavians or Slavs—is always based on something traditional, something that belongs to the past evolution of a race or nation, the cosmographic art of America strives to unite and condense the esthetic images of all humanity into a new symbolic something. The task of the pioneers is gigantic. It requires a universally trained mind to create and express what appeals to the whole world. It requires a Titanic genius to condense the esthetic images so that in their shortest form they may say in a minute what the others would express in roundabout ways for hours. In music it concerns the tempo besides the rhythmic dénouement, whereas in painting it lies in the chromatic and symmetric sequences, as Mr. Giles has demonstrated. This gives to beauty a dynamic vigor and makes it so much more universal than the art of any nation or age could be. But it requires the use of new dynamic symbols and tends to a peculiar esthetic dualism—objective and subjective at the same time. However, dynamic symbols employed in this case are fundamentally different from those employed by the traditionalists of the Old World. Since immemorial ages the Orientals have made use of distinctly developed symbols in art, religion and

esthetic thinking in general. But the Oriental symbols have remained static and traditionally allegorical in one or another respect. They manifest their metaphysical meaning in a mystic-poetic way, but they lack the stimulating faculties of the dynamic symbols of what we need.

The tendency of the esthetic evolution is from the simple to the complex and then again from the complex to the simple, but always with the idea of added intensification. The succeeding Byzantine and Gothic arts were by far more dynamic than the preceding Egyptian and Greek arts. Michelangelo expressed his esthetic images in far more potential dynamic lines than did Praxiteles. The architects who built the Gothic cathedrals employed far more dynamic principles than those who built the temples of Greece or India.

We are living in an age of mind-made energies: steam, gas, electricity, radio, etc.; consequently, our mind craves the emotions that emanate from those new mystery-powers. The rhythm of our industrial environment is totally different from the rhythm of the time of a Leonardo da Vinci or a Rembrandt. The change of rhythm means the change of beauty, of which Schopenhauer said: "Rhythm is in time what symmetry is in space—division into equal parts corresponding to each other."

The intrinsic message of the dynamic arts is: to enjoy the beauty of power. Instead of the sensation of contemplation, dynamics convey the sensation of action. It

means a fusing of time and space. Instead of copying life, dynamic esthetics suggest its deepest depths and highest heights by combining the symmetric symbols with the rhythmic ones. It does not try to imitate nature, but transposes it. Living in the kinetic atmosphere of our industrial cities our mind grows indifferent to static realism and its photographic effects. Just as the realistic drama and realistic novel are gradually losing their grip on the modern mind, so the realistic painting is giving place to the new, more dynamic expressions. Our esthetic conception has reached the point where our kinetically tuned mind requires, not imitation of nature and life, but inspiration. Instead of traditional moods we look for kinetic surprises. We enjoy a suggestion of an esthetic sensation more than an accurate description of it. This proves that the symbolic art of Mr. Giles is the true reflex of the spirit of our time.

Since, according to Mr. Giles's theory, the future of the art of painting is evolving towards dynamic imagery, we should take into consideration those primary elements of esthetic thought that form the foundation of all racial arts. As I said above, American art naturally lacks the traditional racial elements; it strives toward cosmic ideals instead. Poor as is the contemporary syncopated form of American popular music, yet it constitutes the musical Esperanto of all the urban-educated populations of the world. Europe to-day is flooded with American jazz as is the Orient. The same syncopated form of esthetic expression manifests itself

in American architecture and in American literature. The broken lines, the irregular rhythms, and the restless corners here and there that we find predominant in American architecture are nothing but a transposed form of the new musical thinking. It is evident that neither one of the arts has yet found its ultimate foundation. A New York skyscraper is a silent "ragtime" composition, and *vice versa*. However, the skyscraper—as magnificently materialized as the new Roerich Museum, for instance—is, so far, perhaps the most advanced feature of the American dynamic art. It proves that the dynamic rhythm has its historic justification. The dynamic art does not necessarily need to be based upon syncopated rhythm only, but upon the various factors of the kinetic style, the method of expression and the dormant tempi of a color and a design, as demonstrated by the achievements of Mr. Giles.

In order to draw a more distinct line of division between the ethnographic and the cosmic, the static and the dynamic mode of esthetic thought, I refer to the folk arts, as an illustration of the traditional racial trait. My argument is, the classic art is the offspring of rural nature; the dynamic art is the child of our industrial cities. The physical and spiritual bases of every folk-art lie in the rural atmosphere. A folk-song or a folk design is and remains the product of idyllic village life. It mirrors the emotional scale of the tradition-bound country people. It has been molded under the blue sky, in sunshine and storm. The songs of birds and the colors

of nature form its ethnographic background. A village craftsman or troubadour is usually its creator. Static simplicity is its fundamental trait. It exalts the rural moods of the given locality: somber in Scandinavia, gay in Spain, dramatic in Russia.

The place of the birth and growth of syncopated rhythm and intensified symmetry is exclusively the city: the cradle of our industrial evolution. Instead of idyllic images, we meet the images of power. It exalts the noise, rush and alertness of the street. It breathes motion of machines and fever of competition. Its images are kinetic and cosmic. The spirit of the country differs in every nation—in rhythm, color and design; but the spirit of the city is a similar one all over the world: geometrical forms, concrete backgrounds, mechanical energies. It is in this very fact that we have to look for the logical foundation of the future dynamic art, which will emanate from no particular race, from no particular country, nor from any particular image of a racial trait. It will come from the kinetic industrial city, the mother of cosmic idealism. The symbolic designs of the city are destined to take the place of the symbolic designs of the country. The New York dynamic symbols are more potential than the symbols of rural Ireland, Scandinavia, France or Russia, therefore they will triumph over the static racial images.

Mr. Giles shows that the dynamic principles of art have differed in their idiomatic beauty from the classic traditions. Circumstances show that we are entering the

era of cosmic art. We begin it with the same primitive steps, designs and colors that our ancestors employed so many centuries ago; only with this difference: now we view the problem from a universal point of view while our forefathers beheld it from a racial or nationalistic point of view. We are in the cosmic current of evolution and begin our circle where it was left by those who had passed the current of a certain race, locality or class.

Dr. D. W. Ross writes of the dynamic art of Giles: "With a scientific knowledge and understanding of design, with love and order and the sense of beauty, Mr. Giles sees the order and beauty of design in everything, at all times and everywhere; and it is his constant effort to bring design into his drawings. The extraordinary truth of representation, which we see in his work, is not at all the truth of imitation but the truth of imagination: which is a very different thing. While others are giving us the facts of vision and, in most cases, nothing else, Mr. Giles is giving us his ideas: and there is just one idea in each of his drawings."

As a teacher Mr. Giles is equally successful. He teaches what he practices. He tries to get his students to see in the model, or the subject, whatever it is, a geometric symmetry and it is that which the student is asked to draw—with the subject in it. A central vertical is established. The subject is then drawn between balancing diagnosis and their reciprocals, which are at right angles with them. In the process of drawing, the

lines of the representation take the place of the lines of construction, which, in the end, disappear. Given the geometric formula, the effort is to put into it all possible truth in the matter of likeness and representation. By degrees the geometric formula disappears and the truth of representation remains. Working in this way, the artist is, as a rule, limited to the directions and angles of a single right triangle, as it might be used on a drawing board with a T-square. The construction is achieved in straight lines. Curves are then drawn between diverging directions and are determined by those directions: which are the directions of the construction. In that way the truth of representation is achieved with a strict symmetry in space-relations, not otherwise obtainable: but it is the subject, after all, that we think of when we see the drawing.

"Needless to say, Mr. Giles' drawings are not drawn with a triangle and a T-square, but imaginatively, and with a free hand. The result achieved by this method depends, in every case, upon the imagination, discrimination and judgment of the artist, and that is as it should be. I believe that those who come to see Mr. Giles' drawings will agree that they are interesting, significant, and, in the sense of design, beautiful."

Mr. Walter Gutman adds to this:

"Giles is an experimenter in pigment . . . and an innovator in color designs. He possesses imagination—an all too rare gift. Giles is a modernist. The man paints with apparent abandon but the secret of the matter is

that he knows, for the most part, exactly what he is doing. Many of his colors are unnatural—only at the end of the world may one expect to see their counterpart—but they are beautiful. This artist has a gift of unusual color designing. He paints in a manner that portrays a mood, and into that mood we are irresistibly drawn."

EUGENE HIGGINS

EUGENE HIGGINS is the example of an artist who has worked out his own destiny, impelled by irresistible genius, in the throes of seemingly insurmountable obstacles. His paintings and etchings are proof of his individual achievements. His art, with its deep melancholy, stands out as a minor note of our contemporary social shadows, our poor and beggars, our rural types and urban depths. Jean François Millet in France and Eugene Higgins in America are the preachers of the brotherhood of man through their gripping canvases and drawings. A deep note of close relationship runs through the art of Higgins and Millet. Higgins' passionate sympathy with his fellow-men is the keynote of his art. The crouching figures under the bridge, the despondent air of the slum girls, the laborer turning the soil with unvarying and laborious monotony, the poor mother caring for her underfed children—all convey the same message of that strange and incomprehensible mingling of joy and sadness we call life. Like many great minds before him, Higgins finds the greatest subject in a placid and never changing melancholy.

Like Leonid Andreyeff, Gerhart Hauptmann or Maxim Gorky, Higgins looks for artistic inspiration in the dramatic depths of life. His sympathies are with

the farmers, workingmen, tramps and outlaws of every kind. Rightly or wrongly he has come to be looked upon as one of the high priests of social revolution. The socialistic doctrines which have been read into the early work of Higgins are rather the outcome of the world's uneasy conscience, brought face to face with a crushing indictment of existing conditions, than of any design on the artist's part to further the cause of a social propaganda by means of his art. The same has been the case with the art of Millet.

Besides being a poet Higgins is a keen student of human psychology. When he finds a suitable subject he traces the lives of these simple folks until he arrives at the basis of their characteristics—and that is where his original philosophy works out dramatic climaxes which his imagination attributes to whatever he is painting at the time. It is a sad and melancholy art, vibrating with purity and truth, the outpouring of a poetic soul yearning to express itself to the utmost of its power. The mind and the character of the artist can be read in every line and in every touch of his brush. His drawings and etchings are even more gripping in their virility and pathos than his impressive paintings. There is a spontaneous quality about them that rarely can be found in most of his contemporaries. It is evident that his intensely emotional mind has found a swift method of expression in black and white. Higgins is a poet, a philosopher, a student of human nature, so that the means he chooses for expressing himself are those which are best fitted to his purpose.

The distinguished American art critic and author, Charles De Kay, writes thus of his etchings and drawings:

"Eugene Higgins is a painter who takes much comfort and no small amount of care in the biting and carving of plate. Sometimes, but not very often, he returns to the idea struck out on the plate in a pastel or oil, and then is anxious to compare the two in order to see the difference in handling, when the vehicles are so unlike. As an etcher, he is individual. He loves strong contrasts of light and shade and likes to indicate figures of secondary importance by steeping them in mysterious shadows where they lurk obscurely and add to the desired emotion. For the most part he prefers twilight to noonday, the muffled sound to the open, the minor to the major key. He is as unlike as possible to the great majority of etchers who are nothing if not definite and positive and rarely house a question as to their meaning in the observer's mind.

"Beginning his apprenticeship in art at Kansas City under difficult and trying conditions, he finally reached the goal of the art student's ambition, Paris, and was confronted by the realization of all he had still to learn before he could fairly call himself an artist. It is to his credit that the stimulus did not altogether dismay him but rather urged him on. So we find him bending all his energy to the task of strengthening his technique without stepping into the grooves that lead to facile imitation and becoming an easy-going practitioner ac-

cording to the examples furnished by the able teachers of the great art center.

"Looking through an album of his etchings, one notes an unusual gift, that of instinctively placing his figures and groups agreeably to the boundaries of the plate. I recall the silhouette of a life-boat coming bow on, the men of the oars and the helmsman indistinct blurs against a fog bank illumined by the light that slants from the right, and waves rising broad and sharp-crested toward the right prow; the composition is as condensed as that of an antique seal; or 'Under the Bridge' a dark, massive tunnel leading to a sun-lit square, dim figures crouched in the shadow of the arched passage and on the right a single figure, that of a tramp; or 'Slum Girl,' outlined against a bit of wall on which her shadow falls where the light is focused, while in the deep shadow to the left and rear lurks in sinister fashion the figure of a man. Similarly the camp-lit figure of a man seated with cards before him at a rough table, while a woman above and to the left descends a rude winding stair, reveals the ability of the artist to place his figures well. Those who study pictures will realize that to speak of this is not to damn with faint praise.

"The quality in his work, however, which counts more than composition is that of suggesting some coming event of importance, and it is this quality that in the main limits the number of his appreciators. Often the suspense makes one uneasy, as if a tragedy were ripe and about to break. In the etching, last mentioned,

for example, the woman coming down stairs, her rigid profile, the blurred shadow of her figure on the wall and the haggard man with his left hand pounced upon the cards that lie face-up before him while his gaze is fixed upon his opponent beyond the frame, carry in their movement and gesture the potentiality of a disaster. The little picture leaves us guessing. Many people dislike that. They want to be cheered, they like to be gay. But there are others who value hugely an artist who can set their wits to work and are grateful to find among the arid commonplaces of idealism a hand to point for them the path of the imagination, though primroses may not grow on either side. Regarding such a scene as this, we resent it, if our fancy should be handicapped by a name. Far from asking that the etcher should label the picture, we are afraid he will lame the frail wings of our fancy with a title. Let each make his own guess."

Eugene Higgins started his artistic career with painting the outcasts of the contemporary city life—New York east side, workingmen of the factories, groups of suburban characteristic types, but he has lately broadened his method and conception—a true homocrat in his heart, Higgins, somewhat similar to Rousseau or Grieg, has made humanity at large his subject matter, although he prefers the rugged types of the soil and toil. A true humanitarian in his heart the artist has made the universe the theme of his epic color poems in which he somewhat resembles Edgar Allan Poe, his favored poet. Higgins' favored themes are rugged ele-

mental figures and simple stirring situations: striking scenes of the primitive country or pathetic positions of our false city civilization. Here he paints plowing farmers, woodcutters or similar toilers of the soil in their true atmosphere of rural solitude, there he depicts the tragedies of an urban lure and recklessness. His language is always epic, always in a minor key like the immortal folk-songs of Ireland, Scandinavia and Russia.

Higgins stands powerfully unique in the American art of to-day. He has worked out his own artistic credo of chromatic songs and sings them on his self-made instrument. His pictures and etchings are not mere esthetic images but they possess the idiosyncrasies of the ballads of the Middle Ages:—arouse the onlookers to emotional moods. Like Millet or Hogarth he is a troubadour in pictorial story-tellings, allegoric and philosophical at the same time. Similar to the works of his illustrious predecessor Higgins' pictures convey pathos and suggestion of sadness. Like Dostoyevsky Higgins psychoanalyzes his figures by displaying the grandeur of their abnormalities. There is a strain of Dostoyevsky's characters in his depicted figures and groups. He is actually a pictorial Dostoyevsky displaying identical esthetic images in his epic art.

A lover of solitude and simple life Higgins avoids society, pretended Bohemianism and social glare. Having made his home in New York, Higgins works most of the time in his studio at West 22d Street, on his country place in Connecticut, or in the more isolated regions

of France, Spain or England. He prefers the simple solitude, an atmosphere of natural life be it city or the country. However, his art is not objective but subjective. He paints life as it is reflected in his inner self.

John Spargo, the author and art critic, has compared Higgins with Maxim Gorky: "What Gorky has done in literature for the underworld, Eugene Higgins has done upon canvas: he is a Gorky in paint. I remember saying to the Russian writer something to the effect that he had portrayed in fiction the outcasts, not of Russia alone but of the whole world, and his replying with a smile of unutterable sadness: 'Ah, I am the Outcast of the World.' " Edwin Markham, the poet, wrote of him: "Mr. Higgins stands in America as the one powerful painter of the tragic lacks and losses, of the doomed and disinherited—the painter who gives us the pathos of the street and hovel, and morgue, as Millet gave us the pathos of the field."

"The question has been raised whether such subjects as Mr. Higgins chooses are suited to the medium of canvas and paint or whether they belong rather to literature," continues John Spargo in his illuminating essay. "It is an old interesting question, one that has confronted every artist who has chosen unusual themes or treated old themes in an unusual way. Michelangelo answered it in his own way, in our own time have Millet and Meunier answered it, each in his own way. So Higgins answers the question himself: 'They who say that my gloomy pictures do not please the eye, but hurt by their realistic representations of misery and woe,

and are not beautiful missing thereby the two chief functions of art, are correct enough from one point of view. They would limit the sphere of art to the things which minister to selfish desires and to things which are pretty merely, having no real concept of the beautiful. Take my "Old Man by the Wall," surrounded by shadows; because he was picturesque I painted him, but I had to first know and understand his kind. Many a man whose cleverness I highly respect would have painted him as a man in rags, moving along by a wall—that and nothing more. And the colored result, an exercise in technique, would be put forth as the picture of an outcast without a hint of the very definite form and movements of the real outcast. To me, it is a simple matter to see that the fault of most modern painting and sculpture is that it shows a lack of thinking and feeling; that the artists themselves are merely clever workmen—in spite of all the nonsense one hears and reads about their artistic abilities, written by critics as superficial as themselves.

" 'When you look at one of Rembrandt's great pictures you not only feel that you are looking at a masterpiece of technique; that you feel, of course, but you feel even more strongly that you are looking at the work of a painter who was also a great thinker. Or take Sargent: I confess I never cared for his work until I saw his portrait of an English nobleman in hunting costume exhibited in the Salon. Sargent painted the whole man, not merely his external appearance but, so to

speak, his blood and soul. Long generations of aristocracy were sticking out all over him. I don't know whether I like aristocracy or not, but certainly I like the portrait of an aristocrat to show unmistakably that he is an aristocrat. This, Sargent accomplished and the pictures stood out above all others in the Salon. It crowned Sargent in the minds of the best critics of France as a master. That illustrates my own attitude perhaps as well as anything I can think of. If I prefer to paint outcasts rather than dandies in drawing-rooms, simply because they interest me greatly, while the dandies interest me not at all, that is no concern to anyone but to myself, so long as I do not throw mud at the outcasts as so many have done. It is of no more concern than Sargent's painting aristocratic types. It is, however, a matter which concerns everybody, who chooses it to make it matter for concern, whether I succeed in painting real outcasts or people made to appear like outcasts by the skilful use of accessories and tricks of technique.'

"Mr. Higgins was born in Kansas City fifty-five years ago. When he was four years old his mother died, and therefore he lived with his father who was a stonecutter by trade. When he was twelve years old or thereabouts an article on Millet, illustrated by sketches which the great artist used to do for his children with a burnt match, gave him his first impulse to be a painter. Millet and Victor Hugo have largely molded his entire life. So great was the influence of 'Les Miserables' upon

him that for years he was accustomed to regard himself as the actual personification of *Jean Valjean.*

"At sixteen years of age he entered the Art School in St. Louis, remaining only one season. He left the school and started to paint on his own account, his first painting being, characteristically, a picture called 'The Tramp.' Big canvases he painted—and still bigger themes. He tells with a good deal of gusto of an immense canvas devoted to the theme of 'Human Evolution'—a foreground of low marsh-land with stone fantastically shaped into a gradual likeness of strange animals and these, in their turn, grotesquely shaped to suggest the evolution of human beings into the perfected type, into whom a wonderfully weird Divinity breathed the breath of life.

"At twenty-three years of age he entered the *École Julien* in Paris and studied under Jean Paul Laurens and Benjamin Constant. . . . Later he studied at the *Beaux Arts* under Gérôme. That he endured the unusual hardship of struggling genius while in Paris we have already heard. He had more than the usual amount of reward, however, his work attracting the attention of a group of influential artists and critics. He regularly exhibited at the exhibitions of the American Art Association in Paris and half a dozen of his pictures were well hung in the New Salon. In 1904 he returned to his country."

Thus, in the case of Eugene Higgins, America has a towering genius in the art of painting and etching, at once a deep thinker and profound poet. His works

have an age-defying quality, an everlasting, eloquent message of our turbulent era. It remains for future generations to determine the inspiring esthetic services that he has rendered to his country and his age.

CHARLES W. HAWTHORNE

THE ART of Charles W. Hawthorne, which hangs in all the leading museums of America and is found in numerous collections and private homes, is a vigorous image of an outstanding master's vistas and views. Individual, original, virile in its design and color, true to life, graphically vivid and yet fragrant and delicate in its minutest details—the paintings of Charles W. Hawthorne will live like the stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Mark Twain. There is something poignantly racial —typically American—in the canvases of this pictorial classic of the New World.

Hawthorne's "Net Mender" in the Provincetown, R. I., School of Design, his "Fisher Boys" in the Peabody Institute, Baltimore, his "Provincetown Fisherman" in John Herron Art Institute in Indianapolis, and "American Motherhood" in the Houston Museum of Fine Arts are and remain the most potential color epics of the American soil. The artist has expressed in them stirring ballads of the soil. They live and hold you with their commanding personalities.

One of the outstanding gifts of the artist is his creation of commanding characters. All the paintings of Hawthorne manifest a galaxy of masterly character—be they fishermen, farmers, provincial potentates, soci-

ety women, country girls, children or animals. His art is reminiscent of Ilya Repin, the celebrated Russian portrait and figure painter. Like Repin, Hawthorne employs brilliant colors and a classic manner of design. All the people he paints live at the first glance. They are so real that you can almost hear their talk and feel their idiosyncrasies. One of the most powerful paintings of the artist is his "Fish and the Man," an eloquent specimen of our passing domestic simplicity.

Charles W. Hawthorne is an American pictorial realist and belongs, with his style, to the tradition of the New England literary geniuses: Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Longfellow. There is nothing veiled, intricate or occult about his vivid canvases. They speak their message simply and plainly and need no special interpretation. The figures or portraits tell their stories at the first glance. His "Madonna of the Harbor" in the High Museum at Atlanta is an eloquent illustration of the argument.

It seems as if provincial harbors, fishermen and aquatic life were the favored themes of the artist, or, at least, form the largest number of his popular pictures. One of the most prominent American art critics assures me that Hawthorne's "Boy with Boat Hook" hanging in the New York National Arts Club, and "Splitting Fish" in the Lotos Club, were the best of his series. His fish are so magnificent that you almost smell them, while his fishermen represent most vividly the types that one has seen here and there along the water fronts, on the markets or in the sporting circles. The

artist, evidently, not only knows his fish and fishermen, but he feels their innermost emotions and gestures, their whims and characteristics to his finger tips. As with live fishermen, those painted by Hawthorne display a fishy look and poise.

Like all the great masters of the past Hawthorne is an outspoken naturalist. Nature is the background of his art. Nature has taught the artist to search beauty in simplicity and in those vivid colors that mark the pulsation of life forces, be they in fish, flowers, woods, animals, birds, butterflies or men. All his pictures reflect animated nature, even when they are nothing but portraits or representations of still life. He has learned the magic of his brush in watching nature along the seashore, in the woods, in small town gardens, along the country roads—in brilliant sunlight and during dark nights. He is not only a master in the studio but much more so along nature's highways of life.

All the figures and portraits that I have seen by Hawthorne have conveyed the impression that the artist has not only fixed his technical focus on the subject matter with the intensity and accuracy of a telescope, but that he has brooded and thought over his themes and models for days before he fixed them on the canvas. Like all sincere masters he has taken his art as his philosophy and religion, and not only put into it his technical versatility and talent, but also imbued it with his inner self, his soul. His pictures radiate that magic power which the contemporary laboratory of science has been unable to determine and define—the

power of life. Only a real genius has the faculty of affixing a magic radiating power into his creation, be that painting, music, poetry or any other art. Leibnitz writes that he watched Rembrandt paint his pictures, more meditating and lamenting about their appearance than actually using the brush. "Rembrandt believed in the magic of his excited eye, the magic of his invocation, the magic of a word," writes Leibnitz. "He believes if he laughs in his soul while painting, the picture will exhale joy; if he covers it with his sighs and moanings, the picture will exhale sorrow." Hawthorne's pictures exhale virility and joy. The artist has saturated his works with more than mere paint, more than a brilliant technical talent. His portraits, figures and groups are animated—ready to walk down the canvas.

One feels a keen note of the American racial soul in all the works of Charles W. Hawthorne. They are not English, French, Spanish or Russian, even if they are similar in the manner of execution to some of the naturalistic masters of those nations; they convey the impression of being distinctly American, like the music of a MacDowell or a Henry F. Gilbert. A clear racial note runs through all Hawthorne's figures, groups and portraits. The best examples in this respect are his "Florist's Daughter" in the New York Engineers Club, and the "Provincetown Fisherman" in John Herron Art Institute, Indianapolis.

The American racial note of art is a peculiar phenomenon which often, in fact in most of cases, European artists and art critics fail to catch. In music it

manifests itself in their style of syncopation and an uneven rhythm; in drama and fiction it lies in what is called a note of action, while in architecture it is best expressed in the upward shooting symmetry of a skyscraper, as best demonstrated in the silhouette of New York. In painting we find it in the virile designs and condensed color harmonies—a pronounced tendency towards intensification and economy of form. There is a definite choreographic note in all racial American art: it is saturated with an inherent movement. Like the ancient Greeks, the racial American artists are most inspired by movement—choreographic images. Endowed with an optimistic and assertive temperament, free from the morbid broodings of the Slav, the sophistications of the French, the heaviness of the English, the sentimentality of the German and with a clear-cut thinking faculty—American artistic impulse turns naturally toward the plastic kinetics. Nothing appeals so much to an average American, already trained in outdoor sports and equipped with restless temperament, as an hour's relaxation in motoring, dancing or some activity—either as an actual participant or as a spectator.

America's position is unusual, in that it fuses all the antagonistic elements of the Old World by obliterating, in a large measure, their original racial peculiarities and bringing about, by the addition of a neutralizing element, a new product, which is neither Anglo-Saxon nor Latin, neither Irish nor Slav. This new product has had many results: in dance—jazz, in music—"ragtime," in architecture—skyscrapers, etc. Born from the coun-

teractions of the various interracial rhythmic peculiarities, it manifests a strong tendency towards naturalism and action which leads us to the conclusion that, while America may never succeed in working out a national music on the order of European nations, undoubtedly sooner or later there will be a typical American art just as there is an American architecture. A nation that is prosperous and plunged headlong in the feverish activities of industry and trade—a nation self-contented and virile—indulges naturally in the art of painting as it does in rhythmic relaxation—the dance.

Just as in every other field of human activities as in art, America displays a cosmopolitan—an urban—trait, for the simple reason that the New World civilization originates with its active industrial life and new political aspirations. It is a little over an hundred years old. European and Asiatic art originated in the country—as a folk art; but American art is born in the whirlpool of active towns and cities. Art in the past sprang from the idyllic imagination of the country people—nomads, troubadours and peasants; whereas our civilization, being a distinct city product mixed with rouge, tinsel, glitter and street car, in its pictorial esthetic expression is naturally a child of the city.

While the country-born paintings of Italy, Spain, Holland and France are like delicately traced flowers with a racial fragrance and grace, the urban-born art is like a ride in a subway or in motor car—a constant movement in a man-made environment. There is no elegance and dreaming in this tactilistic manifestation

of a street echo, but there is the craving for energy and character. Men and women who spend their days in a monotonous office or factory, busy shop or active work in industrial trades, act in the evenings like wild animals freed from their cages. Here is a first generation German or Jew, there a second generation Italian, a newly arrived Irishman, a lost Russian, mixed specimens of humanity in a Babylonian atmosphere, mixed in their races, their culture, beliefs, views, tastes—all anxious to live and enjoy themselves. Their rhythms and sentiments of beauty become shaken, as are their sentiments. In the new surroundings the native traditionalism of a German or the impressionism of a Frenchman become a syncopated esthetic image of a new cosmopolitan race—the American.

Mr. Hawthorne's art is no longer English or European. It is outspoken American. It is an interracial crystallization of the chromatic rhythms of the New World soil. Even his best foreign themes, "The Venetian Girl" in the Worcester Museum and the portrait of a "Portuguese Gentleman" in the Carnegie Institute of Pittsburgh, are distinctly American in their color and conception. The same types painted by an Augustus John would at once betray a European work.

Whether consciously or subconsciously, Hawthorne has fully grasped the racial note of his country and has expressed it in brilliant canvases. His works are the true New World cantatas, sonnets, hymns and symphonies. They "sing" the glory of their soil and their creator in ocular melodies and chromatic harmonies.

Charles W. Hawthorne was born in Maine, January 8, 1872. He studied painting in the Art Students League, National Academy of Design in New York, and was a pupil of William M. Chase, at Shinnecock, Long Island.

He is a member of the National Academy, National Academy of Design, Salmagundi Club, Lotos Club, National Arts Club, Artists' Fund Society, Players Club, Century Association, Coffee House Club, American Water Color Society, National Society of Portrait Painters, National Institute of Arts and Letters, Actors Fund of America. In 1914 he was elected Sociétaire de la Société Nationale des Beaux Arts, Paris.

Mr. Hawthorne has received the Obrig prize of the Salmagundi Club, in 1902; First Hallgarten prize, National Academy of Design in 1904; Evans prize, Salmagundi Club, 1904; Second prize, Worcester, 1904; Second Hallgarten prize, National Academy of Design, 1906; honorable mention, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, 1908; silver medal, Buenos Aires Exposition, 1910; Clarke prize, National Academy of Design, 1911; Isidor gold medal, National Academy of Design, 1914; Altman prize, National Academy of Design, 1915; Temple gold medal, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, 1915; Isidor gold medal, National Academy of Design, 1915; silver medal, Panama Exposition, San Francisco, 1915; Norman Wait Harris prize and medal, Chicago Art Institute, 1917; certificate of award for the best oil painting in the exhibition, Concord Art Association, 1922; Lippincott prize, Pennsylvania Academy, 1923; bronze medal, Philadelphia Ex-

position, 1923; Norman Wait Harris prize and medal, Chicago Art Institute, 1923; Carnegie prize, National Academy of Design, 1924; medal of honor, Concord Art Association, 1925; third prize, International Exhibition, Carnegie Institute, 1925; Proctor prize, National Academy of Design, 1926; gold medal, Sesquicentennial Exposition, Philadelphia, 1926; Richard S. Greenough Memorial prize, Newport Art Association, Newport, R. I., 1928.

Mr. Hawthorne's paintings are represented in the Metropolitan Museum, New York; Corcoran Gallery, Washington; Syracuse Museum; Rhode Island School of Design, Providence; Worcester Museum, Massachusetts; Buffalo Fine Arts Academy; Detroit Institute of Art; City Art Museum, St. Louis; New York Engineers Club; Chicago Art Institute; Peabody Institute, Baltimore; John Herron Art Institute, Indianapolis; Boston Museum of Fine Arts; Toledo Museum of Fine Arts; Dayton Art Institute, Dayton, Ohio; National Academy of Design, New York; National Arts Club, New York; Lotos Club, New York; Fort Worth Museum of Art, Fort Worth, Texas; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh; Houston Museum of Fine Arts; High Museum, Atlanta; Hackley Art Museum, Muskegon, Michigan, and many more.

ROCKWELL KENT

Rockwell Kent may be the hero of an esthetic epic of America in the legends of the future—an Odyssean figure in the New World's spiritual evolution: a painter, a writer, and a rebel, experimenting with life. Art to him is not a profession but an allegorical medium, used to express his emotional philosophy. He may be called an esthetic alchemist or a pictorial troubadour. Art to him is merely an individual hieroglyph of his subconscious self—an attempt to solve the riddle of life. Rockwell Kent paints, not physical nature and pictures of an objective world, but introspective visions and timely *Gemüthsstimmungen*—inner moods. Consequently, his art is altogether subjective, like the philosophy of Oriental mystics or the sad reveries of ecclesiastical painters of the early Christian era. Now he recalls, with his fugue-like paintings and drawings, Johann Sebastian Bach, whose mystic tone images bespeak an introspective explorer of the unknown; then again he suggests a contemporary Marco Polo or an Omar Khayyam. There is a music of the spheres in his art.

Just as the early composers—Gluck, Cherubini and Paesiello—Kent is a pantheistic ecclesiast, searching the unknown Spirit in the reflexes of primitive life and

nature, and their effect on his inner self. He is, likewise, a disciple of Blake and Nietzsche, Hindu philosophy and some old fishermen who live on a barren island. His travel diaries and notes of his daring ventures on ocean voyages, form the inner counterpart of his art. He mirrors, in his sweeping pictorial series, the turbulent and groping spirit of our tradition—rebellious, exploring and searching times.

Before pointing out some of the main idiosyncrasies of Rockwell Kent and of his introspective art, I wish to reproduce a characteristic story published in the International Studio by F. Newlin Price. He writes:

"Rockwell Kent, looking on life and demanding new adventure, sees no great change from time immemorial. There is still the external attribute, and, still enthroned in mortal form, writhe hate and passion or, as the case may be, thrill love and adoration. Youth, youth, unsatisfied, wondering, dreaming, questioning youth, that fain would seek the numbers to life's mystery. He journeys forth to write or sail or paint, and, at last, he makes his record of those truths that come to him, conclusions greatly proved in his living. Then away again, youth still unconvinced, but rejoicing in the riddle. Kent has worked with his hands, day by day, on a house or a well—and on winter days he painted. He knows his hands, for him they exist to do more than carry food short distances—and so they passed from an amateur to an expert carpenter. Kent with a union card! Here was his first great victory, ability to use his hands, to make a boat or to build a house. This was no con-

scious egotist; he loved his work. It was his road to nature philosophy,—these wells dug for two dollars each.

"Pocantico Hills first received this journeyman in 1882. John D. Rockefeller now owns the place, a glorious forest on the Hudson. At ten to a boarding school, a battle of three years against church and teacher in an Episcopal academy in Connecticut; then to Horace Mann School for four years, a constant rebel, stubborn and argumentative. Finally, to Columbia and its school of Architecture, still searching for the 'why' of things. He stood high in his class and there came to his family some solace—perhaps he had intelligence after all! He found a poet teaching mathematics, Professor Ware, and it was at this time that he visited the Pennsylvania Academy show in Philadelphia and felt sure he could paint better pictures. He began to study with William M. Chase and dropped his architecture like a vessel drunk dry.

"From Shinnecock Hills and the painting with Chase —1898—Kent went to Dublin and the master, Abbot Thayer, to battle with that patriarch endlessly, but to receive from him something of the heritage of his great vision. Then came his first voyage to Monhegan—1906 —to paint and carpenter, and to know the sea. Alone on the black island he confronted the exuberant spirit of his own youth and longed to write himself on canvas. Back to New Hampshire in 1909 where he married Thayer's niece, Kathleen Whiting. Life settled down heavily upon his shoulders and he went to Winona, Min-

nesota, as a master carpenter. He taught art at Richmond for a year, and like another American painter, Emil Carlsen, he rendered drawings for architects. He was in New York in 1913, and having acquired some funds, sailed forth to Newfoundland the following year, only to be expelled, like a naughty school boy. So he was employed by Abbot Thayer in his investigation of protective coloration in animals, earning twenty-five dollars a week and doing splendid work. Of his Alaskan trip in 1918 you have read in his book 'Wilderness,' of which flattering things have been said, here and also abroad, where they pronounced it 'the finest thing since Walt Whitman.' Returning to Vermont he felt the *Wanderlust* again and in 1922, in a lifeboat, a four-ton craft, twenty-six feet long, he sailed away to Tierra del Fuego. This you may know from his new book 'Voyaging.' In line with his work as an illustrator it is well to note his work as 'Hogarth Jr' in *Vanity Fair*, virile, strong, imaginative, and by way of jest, with text by 'Rockwell Kent.' He promises some day to go around the world in his little lifeboat searching out beauty, drawing, painting, creating in his living and in his work a vital human document.

"No wonder that the selling of his paintings seems to him quite unimportant, with his resources as a 'renderer' and his success as an author. What troubles him most is the shallow, low tide of esthetic enjoyment, and foolish dogma of production. When Whistler called a sunset ugly he was wrong. To see keenly and to portray sensitively is the artist's rôle. The laws beneath and

through art are harmony and rhythm; they come to the artist for his personal interpretation, according to his power of apprehension. Kent never uses a model. Concentrating, he will dramatize himself into the situation, whether therein he would be relaxed or gripped tightly. He would use the camera on himself, figuratively and literally to find out how he felt or what he did in deep emotion or complacent amusement.

"Originality? I find all, millions it seems, seeking originality. Dressing up to appear, making pretense, play-acting, all by intention. But genius is never self-conscious. There is little play for the element of originality in the human make-up, for the difference between folks is slight, even though no two are ever alike. It is the same with art. 'The Adam' of Michelangelo will ever be a masterpiece, yet there will continue to be Adams in painting and sculpture to the end of time, or until the end of our art at least. Infinite yet slight differences exist; he retains the observation of them subconsciously and mixes with them an immense love for beauty even as a lover thrills and throbs. Only out of egotism rises the Tower of Babel. Other things than ego are important to the genius. Consider that line of Blake about the Saviour—*This is the race that Jesus ran, humble to God, haughty to man.*

"One of the greatest gifts that Kent received was from Abbot Thayer, his uncle. It was that great spirit's passion to condemn the self-expressionists, where most is needed self-forgetfulness, the hoboes of art, they who go in for value received, inflate their own importance

at the expense of their fellow-men, while the true artist stands absorbed in his vision. This difference makes for genius. Like a man well out upon a sea he loves, like a mariner who steers to some satisfying goal of truth and beauty, rising with the dawn, finding energy anew, drawing strength from past endeavors, the genius makes of his art a golden pathway of communication between himself and his lesser brothers.

"It is not true—that doctrine of many people—that beauty is for genius alone. Three college lads grow up, a banker, an engineer, and a painter. As time goes by they change, and at fifty they may feel totally ignorant of each other. Yet if each has really lived, they still can meet in truth and beauty, and never were they very far apart. It is language of all people, intelligible in all places. It is a language that Kent can call his own. Rugged, clean cut, disciple of revolt, he seeks the truth. A mental machine well oiled, a spirit unafraid, pleasantly smiling, direct, he asks no quarter, but dwells in that delightful mood of youth, adventuring after life, thrilled by a beauty just enjoyed, beckoned ever onward by a truth not far away. Always there is the truth which he has found and recorded; always there is a more complete vision which beckons him on."

To such an observation of an accomplished art critic it is difficult to add objectively anything more. However, there is the subjective psychological side of the artist which plays, perhaps, a more significant rôle in this case. Rockwell Kent's diary and life in Alaska are excellent proofs of his artistic credo and, in fact, con-

stitute his confessions, as they reveal the make-up of his God-searching, intuitive self. Like Spinoza he is searching, painting and theorizing about the One Infinite in Nature and Life. Like Buddha, Christ or Mohammed he goes into wilderness, to some lonely island, unknown shore or unexplored wilderness.

Here is a condensed autobiography of Kent's art, written by the artist himself in his "Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska":

"Preface. Most of this was written on Fox Island in Alaska, a journal added to from day to day. It was not meant for publication but merely that we who were living there that year might have always an unfailing memory of a wonderful happy time. There's a ring of truth to all freshly written records of experience that, whatever their shortcomings, make them at least inviolable. . . . The whole is a picture of quiet adventure in the wilderness, above all an adventure of the spirit. . . . The wonder of the wilderness was its quiet tranquillity. It seems that both men and the wild beasts pursued their own paths freely and, as if conscious of the wide freedom of their world, molested one another not at all. It was the bitter philosophy of the trapper who was our companion that of all animals Man was the most terrible; for if the beasts fought and killed for some good cause Man slew for none. . . ."

The artist begins his narrative of his adventure with his little son as his companion in the same simple manner as he paints his picture:

"Chapter I. Discovery. We must have been rowing

for an hour across that seeming mile-wide stretch of water.

"The air is so clear in the North that one new to it is lost in the crowding of great heights and spaces. Distant peaks had risen over the lower mountains of the shore astern. Steep, spruce-clad slopes confronted us. All around was the wilderness, a no-man's-land of mountains or of cragged islands, and southward the wide, the limitless, Pacific Ocean.

"A calm, blue summer's day,—and on we rowed upon our search. Somewhere there must stand awaiting us, as we had pictured it, a little forgotten cabin, one that some prospector or fisherman had built; the cabin, the grove, the sheltered beach, the spring or stream of fresh, cold water,—we could have drawn it even to the view that it must overlook, the sea, and mountains, and the glorious West. We came to this new land, a boy and a man, entirely on a dreamer's search; having had the vision of a Northern Paradise, we came to find it. . . . As the new coast unfolds itself the imagination leaps into full vision of the human drama that there is immanent. The grandeur of the ocean cliff is terrible with threat of shipwreck. To that high ledge the wave may lift you; there, where the storm-dwarfed spruce has found hold for half a century, you perhaps could cling. A hundred times a day you think of death or of escaping it by might and courage. Then at the first softening of the coast toward a cove or inlet you imagine all the mild beauties of a safe harbor, the quiet water and the

28- in our reaching toward Supermanhood-the full and perfect flowering of a human soul;

beach land upon, house-site, a homestead of your own, cleared land, and pastures that look seaward. . . .

"What a scene! Twin lofty mountain masses flanked the entrance and from the back of these the land dipped downwards like a hammock swung between them, its lowest point behind the center of the crescent. A clean and smooth, dark-pebbled beach went all around the bay, the tide-line marked with driftwood, gleaming, bleached bones of trees, fantastic roots and worn and shredded trunks. Above the beach a band of brilliant green and then the deep, black spaces of the forest. . . . There was a green grass lawn beneath our feet extending on one side under an orchard of neatly pruned alders to the mountain's base, and on the other into the forest or along the shore. In the midst of the clearing stood the old man's cabin. . . ."

Such vivid description tells best the character of Kent's symbolic Alaskan paintings. Kent's gargantuan pictorial designs are faintly reminiscent of ancient, Central Asian temple decorations—a sweep of fantastic allegory. His diary reveals the esoteric meaning of his paintings. He continues thus:

"Monday, November eighteenth (1918). To-day a storm from the southeast. It blows like fury. Breakfast by lamplight, work until dark, then dinner—in the neighborhood of three o'clock or maybe four—more work, and a nap, for I felt exhausted. . . . Tuesday, November nineteenth. A dreary, dreary, a weary day. But I've worked or somehow been ceaselessly busy and now I'm about ready for my nightcap of reading and

bed. Four canvases stretched and primed stand to my credit and that alone is one day's work in effort and conquered repugnance. . . . I have just finished the life of Blake and am now reading Blake's prose catalogue, etc., and a book of Indian essays of Coomeraswamy. The intense and illuminating fervor of Blake! I have just read this: 'The human mind cannot go beyond the gift of God, the Holy Ghost. To suppose that Art can go beyond the finest specimens of Art that are now in the world is not knowing what Art is; it is being blind to the gifts of the Spirit.' Here in the supreme simplicity of life amid these mountains the spirit laughs at man's concern with the form of Art, with new expression because the old is outworn; it is man's own poverty of vision yielding him nothing, so that to save himself he must trick out in new garb the old, old commonplaces, or exalt, to be material for art, hitherto discarded trivialities of the mind. . . .

"December fifth. Mild, rainy, snowy, sleepy—the first day back at home. I've done little work and dared look at but one picture—that of the Superman—and it appears truly magnificent. The sky of it is luminous as with northern lights, and the figure lives. After all it is Life which man sees and which he tries to hold and in his Art to recreate. To that end he bends every resource straining at what limits him. If he could only be free, free to rise beyond the limits of expression into *being!* at his prophetic vision of man's destiny assuming himself the lineaments of it, in nature grown gigantic, rearing upwards beyond the narrow clouds of earth into the

unmeasured space of night, his countenance glowing, his arms outstretched in an embrace of wider worlds! This is the spirit and the gesture of Superman. So I am not unhappy. Now work begins again . . .

"I'm reading a little book on Dürer. What a splendid civilization that was in the Middle Ages, with all its faults. To men with my interests can anything be more conclusive proof of the superiority of that age to this than the position of the artist and the scholar in the community? . . . Oh, land of porcelain bathtubs! A man has only to leave all that by which we to-day estimate culture, to realize that all of his own civilization goes with him right to the back woods, and lives there with him refined and undiminished by the hardships there.

"Civilization is not measured by the poverty or the wealth of the few or of the millions, nor by monarchy, republicanism, or even Freedom, nor by whether we work with hands or levers—but by the final fruit of all these, that imperishable record of human spirit, Art. The obituary to-day in America has surely now been written in the poor workshop of some struggling, unknown man. That is all that the future will know of us. . . .

"Last night at bedtime the wind had risen. At some midnight hour the stove went out for I awoke at two and found the cold all about us and the wind hard at it. So with a generous use of kerosene the fire was made to burn again and I returned to a good night's rest. Somehow one does not mind short exposures to the cold.

Many a day I have stood naked out in the wind and then become at once glowing warm again in the hot cabin. Baked bread to-day and it turned out very well. Painted, shivered, wrote, and to-night shall try to design a picture of the 'Weird of the Gods.' But at this moment our supper is ready and two hungry, cold mortals cannot be kept from their corn mush. . . .

"To-night it looked like the picture I have drawn. These are beautiful days. Yesterday it was calm in our little cove as one would look for on a summer's day. The day was blue and mild, a day for work. I made of my 'North Wind' the most beautiful picture that ever was. I stood it facing outwards in the doorway and from far off it still showed as vivid, more vivid and brilliant than nature itself. It's the first time I've taken my pictures into the broad light. There's where they should be seen. . . ."

Kent closes his interesting "Journal of Quiet Adventure" with the following poetic paragraph:

"And now at last it is over. Fox Island will soon become in our memories like a dream or vision, a remote experience too wonderful, for the full liberty we knew there and the deep peace, to be remembered or believed in as a real experience in life. It was for us as it should be, serene and wholesome; love—but no hate, faith without disillusionment, the absolute for the toiling hands of man and for his soaring spirit. Olson (the only inhabitant of the island) of the deep experience, strong, brave, generous and gentle like a child; and

his island—like Paradise. Ah, God,—and now the world again!"

Such, briefly, are the inner vistas and spiritual founts of Rockwell Kent's original, individualistic and living art.

97 - The best of me is what is quite impulsive; and looking at myself for a moment with a critic's eye, the forms that occur in my art, the gestures, the spirit of the whole of it is in fact nothing but an exact pictorial record of my unconscious living ideation.

LEON KROLL

Leon Kroll, inscribing one of the greatest pages in our artistic history, is an individual idealizer of our industrial civilization, our skyscrapers and urban silhouettes. His canvases vibrate the rhythm of our kinetic life and sing the songs, in their original chromatic images, of our cosmic spiritual pulse. His dynamically throbbing paintings of New York are the most outstanding esthetic chords of the inner allegory of our industrial existence. Our geometrical architecture and mathematical atmospheres are to Kroll living phenomena, animated monsters. As an art critic has maintained, his "River Front" actually conveys the smell of the steam tugs, river barges, warehouses, longshoremen, piers and all the detail of our busy ocean shore. There is the same feeling of overwhelming grandeur and mysticism in Kroll's New York pictures, as there is in the silhouettes of our metropolis—a man-made world.

Most characteristic of his art is what he says of it in his graphic credo:

"Primarily I suppose that I paint because it interests me more than anything else—and that I have more deep fun out of it. I doubt whether I have any conscious or unconscious desire to do anything in painting except to express myself, a constantly changing self—intangi-

ble, eager to see and know—to progress toward a finer vision—a more beautiful state of mind—neglecting nothing. These phrases express my credo. They include all the qualities necessary to a fine artist. 'Neglecting nothing' is borrowed from Poussin. It fits so perfectly what I feel. I would love to include in a picture every possible quality, which also means discrimination, because quality depends to a great extent upon constant judgment.

"Balance and interplay of form and color, urged on by an emotional love, an eagerness to create which must be held so that every shape and color fills its allotted area harmoniously. The intangible something which makes a work of art an inspiring thing cannot be acquired, though most of the elements which go to make up a work of art can be, by a fairly talented person. The use of geometry—the knowledge of fine juxtaposition of forms and color, the subordination of all subject matter to the purely plastic requirements, even what I call psychological composition—such as the look of an eye—should be included. Its direction may affect the composition.

"In my present state of mind I love to paint as subjects for my pictures, people, life. I even prefer painting landscape which has been loved and touched by the human hand or body. I love to paint my wife—my baby—my cook—my friends!—the environment they live in. I like to paint the landscape they walk in—the rocks they sit on—the sky they look at—chairs, tables, fruit—their bodies clothed and unclothed—the look in

their eyes—their gestures—but all of this, organized with all the care and judgment I am capable of, into a beautiful design."

This positive credo of the artist forms the best premises for a critical analysis of his work. Kroll is a cosmic subjectivist, an introspective allegorist of design and color. Like all great geniuses he philosophizes and broods over each detail and outline of his pictures. He reminds me of the celebrated Chinese artist and art critic, Dr. Lao Chin, who was commissioned by a European art collector to paint one of his marvelous pictures of the Mongolian pheasant dance. When, after a year, the collector came to ask for his commissioned picture, Dr. Lao Chin replied: "It is not yet finished." He came again the following year and the artist gave the same reply. When he came in the third year, he found the unpainted canvas of his picture still in the rear of the studio. "Yes, my friend, now you can have your picture," said Lao Chin, and he took the prepared canvas and, in the presence of the collector, painted the commissioned picture. The collector burst out laughing and said: "Oh, you could have done that three years ago." "No, my friend. You are greatly mistaken. It took me three years to think, brood, feel and practice on the picture that which I executed now in three hours."

Kroll's art betrays carefully thought-out and deeply-felt spiritual procedures before completion. He, like Goethe, lives his finished creations for a long time in his own inner world before he executes them. The grouping of images on his masterly canvases fully prove

this. His idea of idealizing the artifice of our metropolis and saturating it with the same mystery and magic that nature betrays, is very original. Just as he makes the city look overwhelmingly mysterious by means of his genial chromatic counterpoint and the dynamic rhythm of his design, so does he make it humanly epic, by placing his living figures where they naturally have the greatest esthetic effect. Kroll in this respect is an illustrator of the symphonic ballets of the future—a reincarnate Igor Stravinsky or a John Alden Carpenter.

Kroll's paintings of New York remind me of a somewhat similar imaginary attempt of O. Henry in one of his masterly stories, the Voice of the City. Our artificial cave-dwellings, office buildings, apartment houses, hotels and places of amusement have their idiomatic charm when looked at from a certain perspective. They, after all, represent our materialized dreams in one form or another.

Besides the landscape, Kroll is a master in figure painting and in portraiture, of which his portrait of Mrs. Kroll and his "Nude" in the Museum of Des Moines, as well as the striking figure in the Buffalo Museum of Fine Arts serve as illustrations. There is a luminous and romantic quality in his figures and portraits. They live, and they convey an impression of vital truth. His art is not realistic or photographic; it is naturalistic—animated by the spirit of nature.

The naturalistic art of painting, like the naturalistic art of dancing, differs entirely from the so-called realistic school of the past century. The naturalistic artist

does not copy but transposes nature according to his individual conception. He is, in fact, a romanticist in modern terms and belongs to the category of our contemporary romantic composers—Strauss, Sibelius and Gliere.

Strange to say, there is a tonal quality in the works of Kroll. They have an outspoken melodic image, lyric and cheerful. He works in major mode—in nocturnes, barcarols and chromatic rhapsodies. His nudes are sensuous but not obscene. He writes in the vein of Maupassant and Balzac; but not in that of Zola.

Kroll evidently feels and understands women more profoundly than he does men. His figures and portraits of women are far more feminine and alluring than his pictures of men are masculine. Woman is, at any rate, a far more pictorial model than man, in the romantic conception of Kroll's paintings. An overwhelming majority of the great paintings of past masters deal with feminine subjects. Woman has been and still is the towering heroine of the romantic drama—music, fiction, dance and art. Woman for Kroll is *Das Ewig Weibliche*—be she flower girl, actress, dancer, mother or courtesan.

Leon Kroll was born in New York, December 6, 1884. He studied art at the Art Students League and in the National Academy in New York. He continued his studies later in Paris, with Jean P. Laurens as his teacher. Leon Kroll has made his home in New York, but spends his summers in his studio in Maine or abroad.

Kroll's art is represented in the Chicago Art Institute, Pennsylvania Academy, Harrison Gallery in Los Angeles, Detroit Art Institute, City Art Museum in St. Louis, Cleveland Museum of Art, Buffalo Museum of Fine Arts, Des Moines Museum of Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

He has received the following awards:

Salmagundi Club, New York; Bronze medal, Panama Pacific Exhibition, San Francisco; Frank Logan medal and prize of fifteen hundred dollars of the Chicago Art Institute; Thomas Clark prize, National Academy; first prize in Wilmington; first Altman prize, National Academy of Design; Peter Palmer gold medal and one thousand dollar prize, Chicago Art Institute; honorable mention, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh; Temple gold medal, Pennsylvania Academy; first prize, Newport, and others.

With all his naturalistic feeling Kroll remains an outspoken urban artist—an urban romanticist. He expresses nature through an urban eye. His "Central Park in Winter" and his "West Forty-Second Street" are the best illustrations of his individual grasp of landscape, both are perfect masterpieces of contemporary American art.

America—a land of dynamic life—changes the values of the artist, in its skyscrapers, syncopated rhythms and kinetic life. And the art of Leon Kroll is truly the bold venture of an esthetic pilgrim into a fairyland of new conceptions and new expressions.

GARI MELCHERS

THE MASTERLY art of Gari Melchers represents an esthetic link—*aesthetische Uebergangsperiode*—between the older academic classics—Whistler, Sargent and their contemporaries, and the younger masters—Henri, Bellows, Speicher, etc. A brilliant craftsman, accomplished scholar, a profound poet and independent individualist —Gari Melchers will stand out as an exhilarating pioneer in the history of American art. Mr. Melchers' art has been well known for the past twenty years, not only in America but also in Europe.

"Melchers' special quality is more robust, fuller of earthly humanity, more straightforward than ever," writes his biographer. And he tells how the artist had hung a motto—*Waar en Klaar*—True and Clear—over the door of his workroom. "His pictures have the faculty of never growing 'thin' in technique, 'second-hand' in quality or faded into a ghostly semblance of their pristine look. Are they painted for posterity? Melchers is not interested at all, apparently, in the appreciation of his contemporaries; rather, in some strange prescient sense, he is interested tremendously in the status of his accomplishment for those who come after us. Nothing on earth matters so much to this man as the painting of a good picture. 'You are a long time dead, and your

account will be gauged by your faithfulness to your work, not by the worldly gain you might have made if you had been unfaithful to your craft'—you can almost hear him say this, in his fierce, insistent manner."

Melchers' art is autobiographical. It speaks of the brilliancy of his style and the versatility of his genius. It ranges from mural painting to portraiture, from touching sketches of life and drawings of nature to the most impressive character scenes. One of the artist's finest pictures is, undoubtedly, "The Family," owned by the Berlin National Gallery, a large picture of a mother with her child at the breast and the father, dressed in sailor's red undergarments, another child clutching his leg, with a look that haunts the onlooker weeks after.

Gari Melchers was born in Detroit, Michigan, on August 11, 1860. His mother, Mary Bangeton of Buffalo was an American, while his father, Julius Theodore, was born in Westphalia of a French-Dutch mother, the daughter of the Burgomaster of Rees in the Netherlands and a descendant of that Doctor Deyman who figures in the fragments of the burnt Rembrandt in the Amsterdam Museum. He was, by profession, a sculptor and decorator and had studied and worked in Paris under Carpeaux and Etex. Later on he went to London, there he worked on the decorations of the Crystal Palace. He then came to America and settled in Detroit.

Young Melchers went abroad at the age of seventeen and studied painting at the Royal Academy of Düsseldorf, Germany, under Professor von Gebhardt. After

four years of study in Düsseldorf, Melchers went to Paris and entered in 1881 the *École des Beaux Arts.* His teachers in Paris were Boulanger and Lefèbvre. In 1882 he exhibited, at the Salon in Paris, a picture entitled "The Letter," which he had painted in Brittany. The following summer he went to Italy, to make sketches, study and paint.

"Melchers returned to America in 1883, after an absence of six years," writes his biographer. "But in the following year he went back to France, opening a studio in Paris and one in the little fishing village of Egmond, on the sand dunes overlooking the North Sea. The following years he divided between the studio in Paris and another in the Bois le Roi on the outskirts of the forest of Fontainebleau, and Holland. Frequently, however, he came back to America, for a period of a year or more. Many of his visits were devoted to portrait painting. In 1892 he was one of the distinguished American artists who were called together at Chicago to assist in planning the World's Fair. Here, he painted the decorations which afterwards became the property of the University of Michigan and are now placed in the University Library building.

"His life was made still more varied by his acceptance in 1909 of an invitation from the Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar to come and establish himself in Weimar, Germany. Here he was given an elaborate pavilion with several large studios, overlooking the Park, identical with the Liszt dwelling across the way. He lived in Weimar intermittently for five years. In 1903, Melchers

had married a southern lady, Corinne Lawton Mackall, of Savannah, Georgia. The artist returned in 1914 to live in America permanently. He has made his home in a charming old colonial house in Virginia, perching high on a hill, overlooking the Rappahannock River.

"Profound scholar in his work—therefore caring a great deal for form, the design, the pattern of the background, constructive idea, clean, clear true color—he builds up his pictures through sheer force of character, insight and love of humanity and gives them that enduring quality which is the essence of mastery. It is impossible for any living painter to determine the exact place he will occupy many years from now in the estimation of those who judge and whose consensus make masters, for his art is not remote enough that we may weigh it, untrammeled by our personal knowledge and our antipathies or affections evoked by his artistic hardihood. But no one who cares for good work, looking at the pictures of Gari Melchers in the great galleries and collections of America or Europe—paintings that are living, strong, human, fine in tone, often accentuated by a high note of color, firm in impasto, 'fat' in the quality of paint, that look as if they will age well, and that hold their own without effort among masterpieces—can honestly doubt that his place is assured, and will be a high one.

"It may be stimulating and assuring for a painter to have his pictures in all the great art galleries of Europe before his own country acquires them, and one may feel proud, being an American, to encounter great works by

our own artists standing out among the seasoned masterpieces of the world. One is proud to see Wertheimer Sargents in the National Gallery of London, to come upon the serene womanhood of Whistler's 'Mother' in the Louvre; and the bounteous 'Mother and Child' by Melchers in the *Musée du Luxembourg*. In the same museum one is happy to find his other picture 'The Arbor,' a group of figures embowered, the sun filtering through the interlaced trees. In the Dresden Gallery his 'Shipbuilder' holds a place of honor. In the National Gallery in Rome hangs his finely conceived canvas 'The Man with the Cloak.'

"One may well be proud and sad that these many treasures are abroad, but glad again, remembering that we have amended our ways, that in Melchers' native town hangs his superb and splendid masterpiece 'The Fencer.'

"One may turn for contrast to Melchers' 'Maternity' in the Corcoran Gallery in Washington. Here is femininity, motherhood—woman's great privilege. One never looks at his great canvas 'The Blacksmith,' now in the Phillips' Memorial Gallery at Washington, without wondering if the artist knew how much of the exhaustion of life in hard labor he had expressed in the burly old man's tired face, and the beauty in the girl's face beneath the ridiculous hat! This is another of his great masterpieces.

"What is surprising is the diversity of Melchers' work. He is a portrait painter of distinction, exacting from his sitter as much integrity as he himself gives. A

great mural decorator, he obeys the laws of mural decoration—keeping it on the wall. Proof of this is found in 'Peace and War,' in the Congressional Library at Washington, and in the Missouri State Capitol decorations. His mural decorations remind the artist of a delightful incident of a morning visit paid by Melchers to his old friend, Puvis de Chavannes, the great French master. Melchers had just been awarded the much coveted Legion of Honor, but he had not received yet the official notification of the insignia. The French master congratulated him warmly, then disappeared for a moment, returning to pin upon the breast of the younger man his own cross, dangling from the faded ribbon, which he had received years before from the hands of Napoleon III."

Melchers has been awarded gold medals and medals of honor in nearly every capital of Europe. He is an officer of the Legion of Honor, of the Order of St. Michael of Bavaria, of the Red Eagle of Prussia. He is a member of the Royal Academy of Berlin, and of the Institute of France. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Dr. Christian Brinton sums up Melchers' artistic achievements in a masterly essay, saying:

"It was but natural after so long a residence abroad and such continued Continental success, that Gari Melchers should have at length turned toward his native country, where he was less known and where he had seldom exhibited. Within a short time he managed closely to identify himself with local conditions. The

medium has been portraiture, nothing of a departure, for throughout his career he has not only painted numerous specific likenesses, but has always been a discerning student of human physiognomy. You need only gaze at the sober, characterful mien of the 'Man with the Cloak,' who looks from the National Gallery in Rome, or note the appropriative decorative 'Brabançonne' in order to realize how far he had already carried this particular branch of art. And still when he finally returned to America, he discovered just that quality which had thus far been lacking, and which seemed, indeed, there to be awaiting him. During the early and middle phase of development he had practiced an almost anti-emotional verity of statement. He had looked upon life with a certain rigidity, the rigidity of a realist who adds nothing, who takes nothing away. It remained for him to acquire a welcome flexibility of interpretation, and this he attained without sacrificing an iota of his precious conquest. It was in the nature of the man to give no hostages, to make no concessions, nor has he ever swerved from this rule. There is no need for inferring that his former work with its fresh, vivid color-spots, its grave countenances, and enticing glimpses of landscapes—a wood, a garden, or the red roof of some adjacent cottage—was in any degree wanting in a distinct, inherent appeal of its own, yet the more recent canvases display an added measure of grace. The man who depicted with such resolute accent the facts of humbler existence grasps no less accurately the spirit of those more complex beings

whose portraits he is now engaged in painting. While not without their touch of urbanity they are not facile or frivolous likenesses. They reveal, each of them, a rounded, certain mastery and a tonality as crisp and ringing as it is unconventional. No vague, unsanitary landscapes envelop these individuals, nor are they suffocated with costly hangings or imperiled by unsteady bits of pottery. All is consistent, legitimate and stimulating. You never see in this work a touch of drama or a hint of trickery. There is no convulsive straining after effect. The right result comes through an instinctive, well-nigh infallible power of selection. The requisite elements for each picture seem always to have dwelt here within the limits of the frame.

"Although modern in the best interpretation of the word, Gari Melchers is no restless, precipitate innovator. One of his most typical characteristics is a respect for his predecessors. As he himself says: 'Nothing counts in this world with the painter but a good picture; and no matter how good a one you may paint, you have only to go to the galleries and see how many better ones there are.' One of his few theories is that the fine things in art are nearly always so for the same or similar reasons; really big men of all times are strikingly alike. Wholly undisturbed by sudden and apparently radical changes of manner in others, he paints with a breadth and assurance that never fail to convey the desired impression. Behind the slightest of his sketches or the most ambitious full-length is visible a sound, disciplined certainty of purpose which can

hardly go astray. Though, in glancing at his work, you may vaguely be reminded of this painter or that, you will scarcely think of any one not in the highest degree a master-craftsman. Melchers is not a subjective or an imaginative artist. He belongs to the sturdy, positive race of observers. The spirit of his art, as well as its expression, is frankly objective. He continues that tradition which is represented with such impregnable strength and security by some of the foremost painters the world has known—by Hals in Holland and Holbein in Germany. No change of taste or temper can ever dislodge men whose work is characterized by similar directness, simplicity and ample, generous humanity. They offer a splendid counterpoise to tendencies which are nervous and effete. Their very solidity defies all transition, all fluctuation. Now that he has returned for a portion of each season, it is doubly apparent that Gari Melchers' sojourn abroad has splendidly served its purpose."

To these eloquent reviews of Melchers' art and life by such distinguished American art critics the author can merely add, that the artist's canvases of the succeeding years have acquired a profound mellowness and esthetic depth—that peculiar spiritual note which certain poets and authors gained in their later years. We may merely refer to Cervantes, Goethe and Dostoyevsky. They belong to no particular age, country or race; they belong to humanity as a whole.

The paintings of Gari Melchers convey a cosmic spirit, a universal appeal. His subjects are homocratic—

like the traditional spirit of America. There is something tolerant, sympathetic and philosophical in most of his works. They reflect the credo of his life: *Waar en Klaar.*

EUGENE SPEICHER

THE ART of Eugene Speicher is an American rhapsody—noble, classic and masterly in its individual style and racial imagery. Speicher can be called a young American Old Master, a towering figure of many achievements. His works and personality have won nation-wide recognition and his name is usually associated with that of the late Robert Henri and of George Bellows, heading an artistic group of their own.

"Consummate craftsmanship, selective vision, fine taste and ability to see and render personality, and above all an autographic quality, which is the sum of all these parts, are the ingredients which give his work its distinction," writes Helen Appleton Read in her masterly essay on the artist. "To safeguard himself from the pitfalls of superficial virtuosity, to which a natural facility endangered him, he placed, between himself and his ideal of portraiture, the barrier of an intricate self-imposed technique. Every portrait which he paints must be reduced to a carefully thought-out design. Every detail of form, every tone, is related to the whole; every inch of the canvas is painted, and with all this intellectual process the result effected must be a direct, fresh, intriguing statement of personality. In some of his canvases as a result of too great a con-

cern with process, he has lost his directness and statement. But in his more accomplished and mature work, personality emerges in serene, effortless effect.

"It was because Speicher preferred to paint only such types as were sympathetic to his particular vision of life, because portrait painting necessitated a compromise between pleasing himself and sitters, that he gave up the career of popular portrait painter, which his ability to get a likeness and give it at the same time dignity and style, had rapidly accomplished for him. It is not often that an artist has the courage to turn his back deliberately upon a profession carrying with its social *réclame*, financial security and fame of a worldly sort, to devote himself to the pursuance of an esthetic ideal and win out esthetically and popularly. Such, however, has been the case with Speicher. But, in renouncing the career of a popular portrait painter, Speicher may be said to have become a portrait painter in the fullest connotation of the phrase, which is to place equal emphasis on noun and modify adjectives. His portraits are paintings quite as much as they are statements of personality. They have come to be regarded by collectors and museums as being essential to a representative American collection."

In this respect the artist has expressed himself as to his credo in these words: "I believe in skill properly used, and know of no master who is not a master craftsman. Sheer essence can only be thrown into vivid relief by the conquering of one's means. My work can be no

greater than I am, and continual enrichment of my life is of great concern to me.

"Any subject that releases me and sets my creative faculties in motion, I believe to be an adequate subject. It is what I take to the subject that is of importance. When I successfully express myself, my work is autobiographical, and registers what appreciation and understanding of life I have."

"His carefully pondered technique, however, differs fundamentally from the self-conscious manner of the modern formula, as wisdom differs from sophistication," continues Helen Appleton Read. "It is the inevitable concomitant of his point of view and of himself. His portraits, whether the subjects are American or French women, Woodstock villagers or fellow painters, are Speicher's. They reveal a vigorous sanity, rugged health with its corresponding largeness of viewpoint, a rich capacity for life, a sensitive, almost feminine appreciation for the lovely and gracious, an intellectual curiosity and a never satisfied technical ideal. His work, in being an autobiographic expression of an American painter who has mastered his medium to the point of making his intention clear and apparent, is distinctively American—a quality instinctively felt but difficult to isolate. Simplicity, robustness, distinction, restraint, incompletely define it. Homer and Eakins had it. It is by no means a colloquial; it is typically American.

"In Speicher's artistic biography may be read the story of American art for the period which it covers.

His friends are the men who have directed the trend of American art for the first quarter of the twentieth century. And not only does his career coincide with the main events and issues of the last twenty years, but it has become, in itself, a determining influence in American painting. Emerson sums it up as follows: 'We find that the question—What is Art?—leads directly to another—Why is the Artist?—and the solution of this is the key to the history of art.'

"When Speicher came to New York from Buffalo in 1906 to study at the Art Students' League, American painting was serenely unaware that so-called modern art was commencing to disturb the secure tradition of the Salons. Speicher's prize-winning proclivity soon manifested itself by winning the Kelly prize for a portrait of Patsy O'Keefe, a fellow student, and none other than the now well-known painter, Georgia O'Keefe. The theory that student prodigies seldom fulfil their promises is, in the case of Speicher, not substantiated, the O'Keefe portrait which still hangs in the League galleries remains a charming and capable statement of personality. The Speicher quality was already manifested.

"At this time the nearest approach to radicalism in art was in the teachings of Robert Henri, whose classes in the Old Lincoln Arcade Speicher attended in 1908. Henri's radicalism went no further than asking his pupils to go to life for their inspiration and subject matter —advice, iconoclastic enough at a time when posed studio models, subject pictures and emotional land-

scapes were the sole legitimate province of the painter. But Henri was a great teacher whose greatness extended far beyond a mere transmitting of his craft. Whoever came under his inspirational influence carried with him an inquiring attitude towards life and art which animated his point of view and triumphed over the leveling effect which the theories and cults of the French Moderns brought about. It was during his year with Henri that Speicher first met George Bellows, and the friendship which was one of those mutual inspirational friendships which occur so frequently in the biography of art, had its inception. Other Henri pupils of the same period who have become outstanding figures in American painting were Rockwell Kent, Edward Hopper and Guy Pene du Bois.

" 'What we have to do is to be forever curiously testing new opinions and courting new impressions, never acquiescing in facile orthodoxy,' is the attitude of mind Pater prescribes as necessary to the production of creative work. It was this inquiring, never-satisfied spirit which compelled Speicher to look beyond the competent orthodoxy characteristic of his painting in the years of his first succession. He turned his back on the exhibition world for two years. In his Woodstock studio he analyzed and studied the qualities of Cezanne, Renoir and the leaders of Post Impressionism to ascertain what their message was for him. The pictures which he exhibited after this period of assimilation and experiment were not new Speichers nor 'Speicherized' versions of the French Moderns, but Speichers immea-

surably enriched as to technique and ennobled as to conception.

"Speicher's style is as American in its restrained realism as Renoir's is Gallic in its sensuous exuberance. Like Renoir, Speicher prefers to paint women, and like him he delights to paint the bloom of flesh and the details of textures of women's dress. But the relationship between the *Mae Murray* painted in 1909 before he ever came to study Renoir and the *Lydia* in 1927 is evident. The latter is immeasurably more accomplished through a mastery of his medium, which, in his own words, allows the essence to be shown in sharp relief, but needing no signature to announce its authorship.

"Speicher's reaction to the modern movement parallels the experience of the majority of inquiring vigorous intellects of his generation in the United States. The strongest talents have come through, enriched by their study and experimentation, but with a personality unaltered. Only the weaker men have completely submerged themselves in the French ideal."

While Helen Appleton Read has emphasized Speicher's portrait painting and written as if the artist was a master in portraiture, I wish to quote Virgil Barker who writes of Speicher's landscape and drawings besides his portrait work as follows:

"The drawings of a painter or sculptor often show what may be deliberately or inadvertently obscured in the completed works; they may even display admirable qualities that are actually lost in the latter. In their

spontaneity, in their very incompleteness, they are, by that, much closer to the artist's first conception—a circumstance which, in not a few instances, gives to them a greater esthetic value than the more ambitious attempts to realize the same images at one further removed. In any case, correctly interpreted, drawings offer the surest possible insight into the workings of their maker's mind.

"To examine Speicher's drawings is to recognize first of all that they are not the self-conscious and mincing productions of a small mentality. They are not laboriously stippled into that trivial completeness which spells boredom. They have not the petty perfections that constrain what should be alive into something 'icily regular, faultily faultless, splendidly null.'

"Rather are they the honest searchings of a genuine artist after living qualities. There can be daintiness of detail, as in the flower drawing, but none of that trifling with inexpressive minutiæ which bespeaks a lazy brain and eye. There can be sensitiveness to textures, as is everywhere visible, but nowhere that excess of sensibility to mere surfaces, which bespeaks a valetudinarian art. Always there is strength, but never brutality; always there is power, but never power out of control.

"Here, in their vitality, is the prime worth of these drawings. Their boldness of stroke witnesses to a driving after the big aspects, after the broad massing which subordinates or omits in order to sweep everything together into a unified whole. The fact that they were done on cameo paper, which permits of no concealment

or erasure, only emphasizes the artistic integrity of their creator. His large way of seeing, his amplitude of rendering, afford a satisfaction correspondingly deep. His drawings are both first-rate of their kind and of the best possible kind. . . .

"Speicher did not start his career with the handicap of any precocious flourishing of oil paint before the eyes of a startled world. Certain of his early productions keep one too conscious of the medium, because, apparently, he had not then mastered it to the point of using it freely. But this difficulty has now been long surmounted, and one of the outstanding characteristics of the later work is its technical self-possession. In this matter, photographs and half-tone reproductions are unjust to the originals because they tend to accentuate the pigmental surface unduly. However, good painting is not obliged to adulterate its own virtues for the sake of appearing well in mechanical reproductions and an unavoidable appearance of 'paintiness' in the latter will not obstruct eyes accustomed to translate their signs back into their original language. In the presence of Speicher's actual pictures one always knows he is working in paint because he never attempts anything which the nature of the stuff does not permit; but there is never any vulgar exhibition or mere facility. Too much emphasis on the medium is almost as bad as too little regard for its real character, and between the two extremes there is a comparatively narrow range in which the mind can move unhampered by an exaggerated consciousness of the material. Within this range Speicher

the technician manages felicitously. He enjoys his technical meal; but his is the gusto of the *gourmet* rather than the greediness of the glutton.

"His ability to think in paint manifests itself equally in his handling of color and in his handling of form. Speicher's conception of color has reference to the canvas as a whole. It is something born of right relationships between the various colors which it contains. He requires comparatively few colors to bring about color; his skill as a colorist consists in weaving the former into a finely consistent color-mass. When that has been accomplished, the alteration of any specific color area within the mass will make itself felt in a jarring relationship to the whole and a consequent destruction of the mass unity. The process of producing color out of colors in a painting is analogous to the process of producing music out of sounds with an orchestra; the sound mass must be one harmonious whole in which the sounds produced by the various instruments are merged. The result in each case is something more than a mere assemblage of details, just as the human personality is something more than a mere conglomeration of cells. . . .

"Speicher's flower subjects are in no wise plodding copies of the objects from which he worked; the latter simply suggested to him a color theme which he worked out with a palette of orchestral fulness. By keeping a balance, as in nature, between the cold and the warm colors, by not overdoing the brasses, he realized the buoyancy and vibrancy of life. . . .

"Speicher's landscapes are sensibly small in size.

Our professional landscape painters work overlarge as a rule; it seems to be almost a point of honor with them to make pictures on a scale that will demand the principal positions in the large exhibitions. Thus, they forego two advantages—the suggestive power of concentration and physical suitability to the constricted quarters of modern life. The latter is an economic factor which is already making itself felt in all forms of commercial production, even in the painting of the typical American landscape. Meanwhile, Speicher for one, is availing himself of the esthetic gain first named; and his landscapes are intimate things to live with, in no anxiety lest their suggestiveness be exhausted. One must live with his landscapes fully to appreciate these qualities. . . .

"When Speicher paints men the resulting characters are quite forceful and masculine; they are emphatically a man's men. But so far as concerns subject matter, Speicher's prime interest is plainly in womankind. This is entirely as it should be. . . . There is no question that Speicher's most notable painting of a man so far is 'The Hunter,' which received the Second Medal and the accompanying money prize at the International Exhibition at Carnegie Institute in 1923. . . .

"The finest of his portraits exemplify with marked clarity his idea of design as determined by a philosophical conception of gravitational repose. They contain no obvious posing of the subjects; with care and study the details have fallen into the places where they naturally belong and fine designs have emerged. These

designs have a thorough self-sufficiency; the forms are realized to a remarkable degree; the pictures bear the unmistakable stamp of the painter's personality, yet the sitters are notably individualized; they are alive with a poised vitality and attract with a noble reticence.

"Speicher paints as a whole human being and not as a specialized optical machine; he is experiencing his subject matter with his entire nature and synthesizing this many-sided experience into pictures which in turn afford others a like wholeness of experience. It is, therefore, safe to say, that his horizon will widen continually to the end, and that his art will be kept fresh with continually new conceptions. The mind of the man whose aim is simply technical facility is bound to contract with age, until at last he becomes bored with the very skill which he set out to acquire. Speicher will keep young through his experiencing nature."

Eugene Speicher was born in Buffalo, April 5, 1883, and received his first artistic education in the Art Students' League in Buffalo, from 1901 till 1906. He continued his studies with the New York Art Students' League in 1906 till 1907, and then took a postgraduate course with Robert Henri in 1908. He received the Thomas R. Proctor Prize, in the National Academy of Design, New York, in 1911, the Joseph Isidor Portrait prize, Salamander Club, New York, 1912; third Hallgarten prize, National Academy Design, in 1914; first Hallgarten prize, National Academy Design, 1915; silver medal, Panama Pacific Exposition, 1915; Beck gold medal for portrait painting, Pennsylvania Academy of

Fine Arts, Philadelphia, 1916; third prize, Carnegie Institute International Exposition, 1922; Potter Palmer gold medal, Chicago Art Institute, 1927; second prize, Corcoran Gallery of Fine Arts, 1928.

Mr. Speicher is represented: in the Metropolitan Museum, New York; Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo; Cleveland Museum of Art; Detroit Museum of Art; Worcester Museum of Art, Mass.; Phillips Memorial Gallery, Washington, D. C.; Galveston Museum of Art; Des Moines Museum of Art; Fogg Museum of Art, Cambridge, Mass., and many more.

GIRAFFES—Robert W. Chanler
Luxembourg Museum

FLAMES—Robert W. Chanler
Collection of Mrs. H. P. Whitney, New York

WITH THE THREE CHILDREN—JOHN E. COSTIGAN

Babcock Galleries, New York

EARLY SPRING—John E. Costigan
Babcock Galleries, New York

SUMMER—Leon Dabo

THE CLOUD—Leon Dabo
Metropolitan Museum of Art

DRIVEN OUT—Eugene Higgins

CONVICTS—Eugene Higgins

AMERICAN MOTHERHOOD—CHARLES W. HAWTHORNE
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

FISH AND THE MAN — Charles W. Hawthorne

MESSENGER—Howard Giles

ALPHA—Howard Giles

WHEN THE SUN SHINES—Rockwell Kent

ALASKA—Rockwell Kent

American Section, Roerich Museum, New York

SLEEP—Leon Kroll
City Art Museum, St. Louis

DORSHKA—Leon Kroll

THE SERMON—Gari Melchers

Toledo Museum of Art

MADONNA—Gari Melchers
Metropolitan Museum of Art

JOHN HOMMEL—QUARRYMAN—Eugene Speicher
Private Collection, New York

TORSE OF HILDA—Eugene Speicher
Detroit Art Institute